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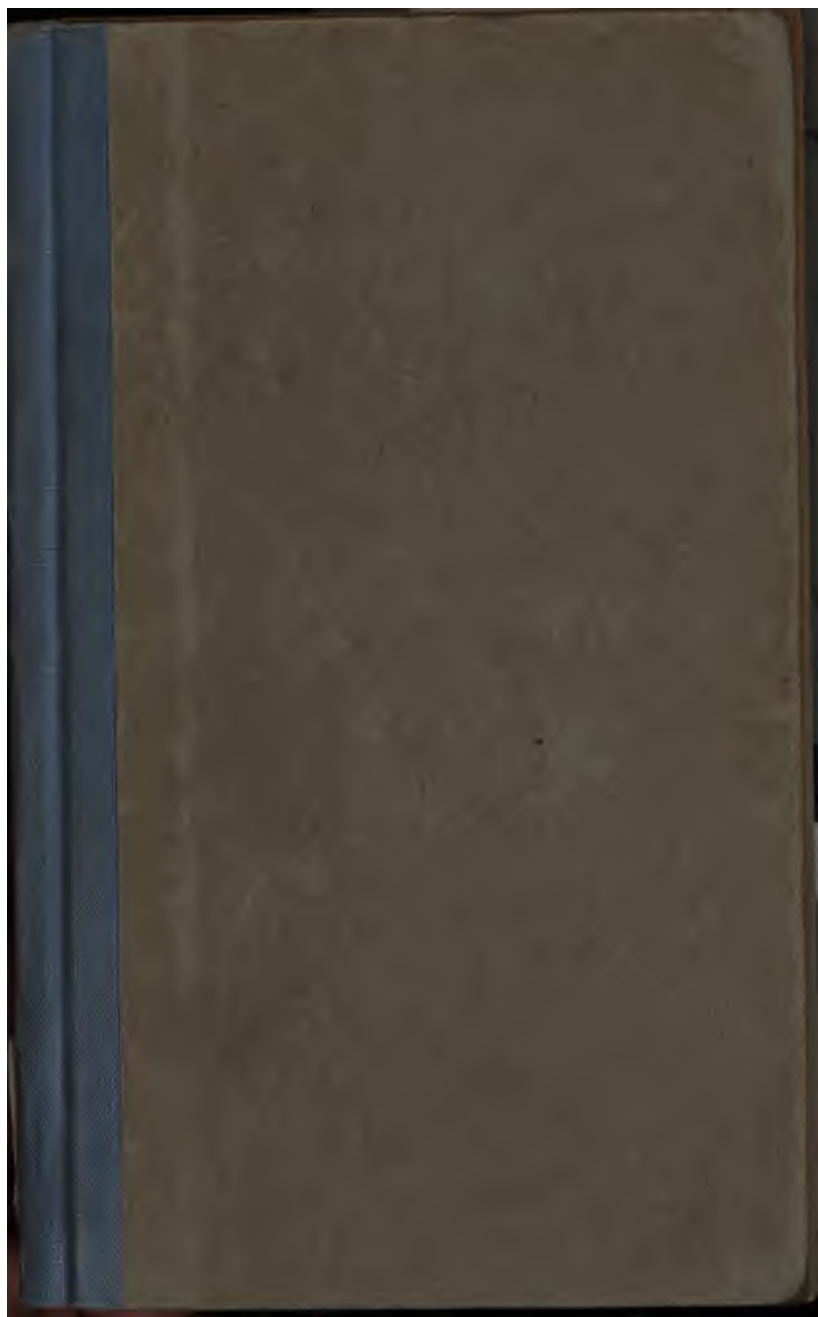
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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
REYNARD THE FOX.

TRANSLATED AND PRINTED BY  
WILLIAM CAXTON,  
1481.

REVISED BY  
EDMUND GOLDSMID, F.R.H.S.

—  
VOL. I.  
—

PRIVATELY PRINTED, EDINBURGH.  
1884.





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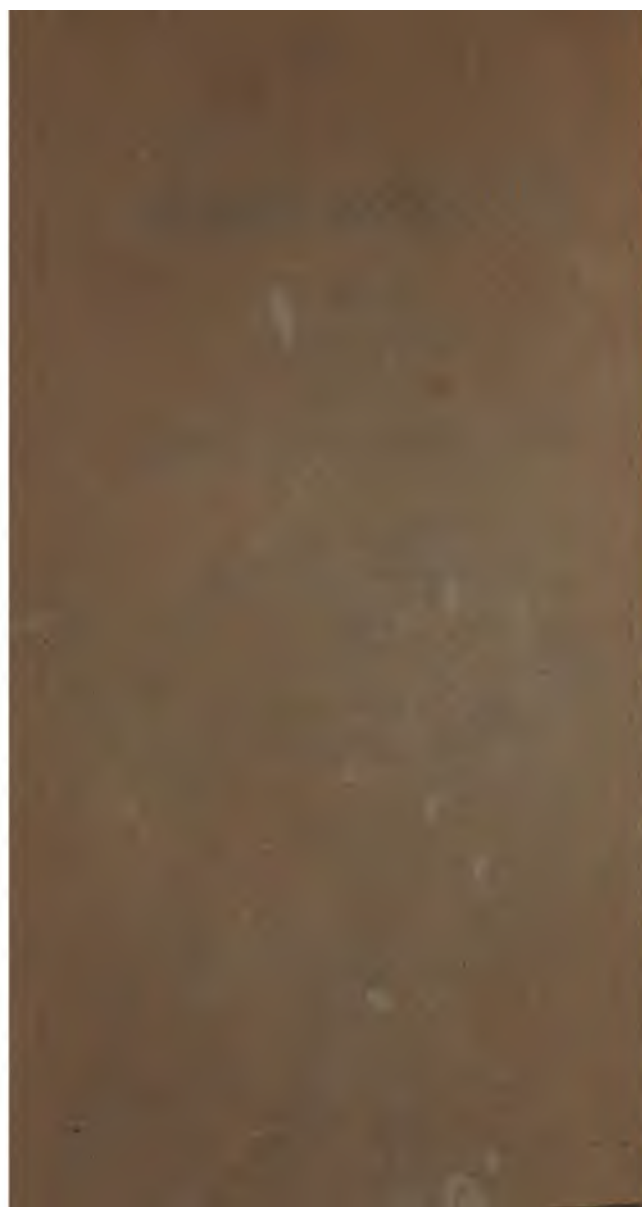
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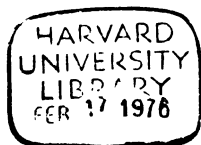
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## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

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### *Editions of the Story.*

#### A.—ISSUES IN TRANSLATOR'S LIFETIME.

1. 17 Aug. 1479. Gouda 4to. *Hystorie van Reynaert die vos*. [COLOPHON] Hier eyndet die hystorie van reynaert die vos, ende is gheprent ter goude in hollant by mi gheraert leeu den seuentienden dach in augusto Int iaer M.CCCC. en LXXIX.

Of earlier date than any other *printed REYNARD* in any language whatsoever. The copy in the Greville Collection is thought to be the only one in existence.

2. June 1481. Westminster 4to. The printing of CAXTON's translation finished. Very rare.
3. [1489. Westminster 4to.] A second Edition printed by CAXTON. Without printer's name, or place, or date. The only known copy is in the Pepysian Library, Cambridge. See Catalogue of *Caxton Celebration*, 1877, p. 21. No. 156.

---

#### B.—EDITIONS SINCE HIS DEATH.

(Only the principal Editions are given).

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By THOMAS GUALTIER. 1550. 8vo.
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- 10, 11, 12. Three metrical versions appeared in  
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don, Longman, 1844. Broad 8vo.
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31. Reynard the Fox. Edinburgh. Privately printed, 1884. *The present edition, forming Volumes X. and XI. of the "Bibliotheca Curiosa."*

N.B.—Those editions printed in LARGE TYPE are *Reprints* of Caxton's translations.

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NOTE.—For particulars of the origin, changes, and mutilations undergone by the "History of Reynard the Fox," consult Marchand, Dict. Historique, vol. i. p. 276, article *Gieffe*; Dibdin's *Ame's Typographical Antiquities*, i. 114; Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, ii. 347; *Foreign Quarterly Review*, viii. 215 and 381, and xvii. 286; *Edinburgh Review*, liii. 159; *Gentlemen's Mag.*, N.S., iv. 188; *Le Roman du Renart*, Supplement, Variantes et Corrections, par P. Chabaille; and Mr. Thom's Introductory Essay to the Percy Society's Edition (No. 21 of above list).



## INTRODUCTION.

[Being extracts from Thomas Carlyle's Article on German Literature in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, 1831.]

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THE story of *Reinecke Fuchs*, or to give it the original Low German name, *Reineke de Vos*, is, more than any other, a truly European performance: for some centuries, a universal household possession and secular Bible, read everywhere, in the palace and the hut; it still interests us, moreover, by its intrinsic worth, being on the whole the most poetical and meritorious production of our Western World in that kind; or perhaps of the whole world, though, in such matters, the West has generally yielded to, and learned from the East.\*

. . . So much for the outward fortunes of this remarkable Book. It comes before us with a character such as can only belong to a very few; that of being a true world's-Book, which through centuries was everywhere at home, the spirit of which diffused itself into all languages and all minds. The quaint *Æsopic* figures have painted themselves in innumerable heads; that rough deep-lying humour has been the laughter of many generations. So that, at worst, we must regard

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\* P. 381.

this *Reinecke* as an ancient Idol, once worshipped, and still interesting for that circumstance, were the sculpture never so rude. We can love it, moreover, as being indigenous, wholly of our own creation : it sprang up from European sense and character, and was a faithful type and organ of these.

But independently of all extrinsic considerations, the fable of *Reinecke* may challenge a judgment on its own merits. Cunningly constructed, and not without a true poetic life, we must admit it to be : great power of conception and invention, great pictorial fidelity, a warm, sunny tone of colouring, are manifest enough. It is full of broad, rustic mirth ; inexhaustible in comic devices ; a World-Saturnalia, where Wolves tonsured into Monks, and nigh starved by short commons, Foxes pilgriming to Rome for absolution, Cocks pleading at the judgment-bar, make strange mummary. Nor is this wild Parody of Human Life without its meaning and moral : it is an Air-pageant from Fancy's Dream-grotto, yet Wisdom lurks in it ; as we gaze the vision becomes poetic and prophetic. A true Irony must have dwelt in the Poet's heart and head : here, under grotesque shadows, he gives the saddest picture of Reality ; yet for us without sadness ; his figures mask themselves in uncouth, bestial vizards, and enact, gambolling ; their Tragedy dissolves into sardonic grins. He has a deep, heartfelt Humour sporting with the world and its evils in kind mockery ; this is the

poetic *soul*, round which the outward *materiel* has fashioned itself into living coherence. And so, in that rude old Apologue, we have still a mirror, though now tarnished and time-worn, of true magic reality : and can discern there, in cunning reflex, some image both of our destiny and of our duty ; for now, as then, "Prudence is the only virtue sure of its reward," and Cunning triumphs where Honesty is worsted ; and now, as then, it is the wise man's part to know this, and cheerfully look for it, and cheerfully defy it :

*Ut vulpis adulatio*

Here thro' his own world moveth,

*Sic hominis et ratio*

Most like to REYNARD proveth.

If *Reinecke* is nowise a perfect Comic Epos, it has various features of such, and, above all, a genuine Epic spirit, which is the rarest feature.\*

. . . . Nevertheless, the old Low-German original has also a certain charm, and simply as the original would claim some notice. It was reckoned greatly the best performance that was ever brought out in that Dialect ; interesting, moreover, in a philological point of view, especially to us English ; being properly the language of our old Saxon Fatherland ; and still curiously like our own, though the two, for some twelve centuries, have had no brotherly communication.†

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\* P. 385.

† P. 388.





This is the table of the historye  
of reynart the fore

[THE FIRST PART.]

<b>I</b> n the first booke the kynge of alle bestes the lyon helde his court capitulo. primo	
How Isegrim the wolf com- playned first on the fore ca	.iij.
The complaynt of curtoys the hound and of the catte Cybert capitulo	.iiij.
How grymbert the dasse the fores susters sone answered for the fore to the kynge capitulo	.iiij.
How chantecler the cok com- playned on the fore ca.	.v.
How the kynge sayde touchyng the complaynt ca	.vi.
How bruyen the here spedde wyth the fore capitulo	.viij.

How the here ete the hony capitulo	.viij.
The complaynt of the here vpon the fore capitulo	.ix.
How the kynge sente Tybert the catte for the fore ca	.x.
How grymbert brought the fore to the lawe ca	.xi.
How the fore was shryuen to grymbert capitulo	.xij.
How the fore cam to the court and excused hym ca	.xiiij.
How the fore was arested and Juded to deth ca	.xiiij.
How the fore was ledde to the galwes capitulo	.xv.
How the fore made open con- fession to fore the kynge and to fore alle them that wold here it capitulo	.xvi.
How the fore brought them in danger that wold haue brought hym to deth And how he gate the grace of the kynge capitulo	.xviij.

How the wulf and the bere  
were arested by the labour  
of the fore capitulo .xviiiij.

How the wulf and his wyf  
suffred her shoyes to be  
pluckyd of And how the fore  
dyde them on his feet ffor  
to go to rome capitulo .xix.

How kywart the hare was  
slayn by the fore capitulo .xx.

How the fore sente the hares  
heed to the kyng by bellyn  
the Ramme capitulo .xxi.

How bellyn the ramme and  
alle his lynage were Jugged  
to be gyuen to the wulf and  
to the bere capitulo .xxiiij:





¶ Her begynneth th[e h]ystorie of  
regnard the fore



IN this historye ben wreton the parables/  
goode lerynge / and dyuerse poyntes to  
be merkyd / by whiche poyntes men  
maye lerne to come to the subtyl knowe-  
leche of suche thynges as dayly ben vsed and had  
in the counseyllys of lordes and prelates gostly and  
worldly / and / also emonge marchantes and other  
comone peple / And this booke is maad for nede  
and prouffyte of alle god folke / As fer as they  
in redyng or heeryng of it shal mowe vnderstande  
and fele the forsayd subtyl deceytes that dayly ben  
vsed in the worlde / not to thentente that men  
shold vse them but that euery man shold eschewe  
and kepe hym from the subtyl false shrewis that  
they be not deceyuyd / Thenne who that wyll haue  
the very vnderstandyng of this mater / he muste ofte  
and many tymes rede in thys boke and earnestly  
and diligently marke wel that he redeth / ffor it is  
sette subtylly / lyke as ye shal see in redyng of it/  
and not onès to rede it ffor a man shal not wyth  
ones ouer redyng fynde the ryght vnderstandyng  
ne comprise it wel / but oftymes to rede it shal  
cause it wel to be vnderstande / And for them that  
vnderstandeth it / it shall be right Ioyous playasant  
and prouffitable



How the lyon kynge of alle bestis  
 sent out his mandementis that alle  
 beestis sholde come to his feest  
 and court capitulo primo



It was aboute the tyme of penthecoste  
 or whytsontyde / that the wodes  
 comynly be lusty and gladsom /  
 And the trees clad with leuys and  
 blossoms and the ground with herbes  
 and flowris swete smellyng and also the fowles  
 and byrdes syngen melodyously in theyr armonye /  
 That the lyon the noble kynge of all beestis wolde  
 in the holy dayes of thys feest holde on open  
 Court at stade / whyche he dyde to knowe ouer  
 alle in his lande / And commanded by straye  
 conmyssyons and maundements that euery beest  
 shold come thyder / in suche wyse that alle the  
 beestis grete and smale cam to the courte sauf  
 reynard the fox / for he knewe hym self fawty and  
 gylty in many thynges ayenst many beestis that  
 thyder sholde comen that he durste not auenture  
 to goo thyder / whan the kynge of alle beestis had  
 assemblid alle his court / ther was none of them  
 alle but that he had complayned sore on Reynart  
 the foxe.

The first complaynt made by  
 Isegrym the wulf on Reynart  
 capitulo ¶¶¶

**I**Segrym the wulf wyth his lynage and  
 frendes cam and stode to fore the  
 kynge / And sayde hye and myghty  
 prynce my lord the kynge I beseche  
 yow that thurgh your grete myght / right / and  
 mercy that ye wyl haue pyte on the grete trespas  
 and the vnresonable mysdedes that reynart the  
 foxe hath don to me and to my wyf that is to wete  
 he is comen in to my hows ayenst the wylle of my  
 wyf / And there he hath be pyssed my chyldren  
 where as they laye in suche wyse as they therof  
 ben woxen blynde / wherupon was a day sette /  
 and was Iudged that reynart sholde come and haue  
 excused hym hierof / and haue sworn on the holy  
 sayntes that he was not gylty therof / And whan  
 the book wyth the sayntes was brought forth / tho  
 had reynart bythouht hym other wyse / And  
 wente his waye agayn in to his hole / as he had  
 nought sette thereby / And dere kynge this  
 knowen wel many of the bestes that now be  
 comen hyther to your court / And yet hath he  
 trespaced to me in many o her thinges / he is not  
 lyuyng that coude telle alle that I now leue  
 vntolde / But the shame and vyllonye that he  
 hath don to my wyf / that shal I neuer hyde ne

suffre it vnauengyd but that he shal make to me  
large amendes /

### The complaynt of Courtoys the hounde capitulo iii

**W**han thyse wordes were spoken so stode  
there a lytyl hounde and was named  
courtoys / and complayned to the  
kyng / how that in the colde wynter  
in the harde froste he had ben sore forwynter/  
in such wyse as he had kepte nomore mete than  
a puddyng / wyche puddyng reynard the foxe  
had taken away from hym

### Tho spak thybert the catte

**W**yth this so cam Tybert the catte wyth  
an Irous moed / and sprang in emonge  
them and sayde My lord the kyng / I  
here hier that reynart is sore com-  
playned on / and hier is none but that he hath  
ynowh to doo to clere hym self / that courtoys hier  
complayneth of that is passyd many yeres goon /  
how be it that I complayne not / that pudyng was  
myne / ffor I hadde wonne it by nyghte in a mylle /  
The myllar laye and slepe / yf courtoys had ony  
parte hieron / that came by me to /

Thenne spak panther / Thynke ye Tybert that



it were good that reynard sholde not be complayned on / he is a very murderer / a rouer / and a theef / he loueth noman so wel / not our lord the kyng here that he wel wold that he shuld lese good and worshyp / so that he myght wyne as moche as a legge of a fat henne / I shal telle yow what I sawe hym do yesterday to Cuwaert the hare that hier standeth in the kynges pees and saufgarde / he promysed to Cuwart and sayde he wold teche hym his credo / and make hym a good chapelayn / he made hym goo sytte bytwene his legges and sange and cryde lowde Credo. Credo. my waye laye ther by there that I herde this songe / Tho wente I ner and fonde maister reynard that had lefte that he fyrst redde and songe / and bygan to playe his olde playe / ffor he had caught kywaert by the throte / and had I not that tyme comen he sholde haue taken his lyf from hym like as ye hie may see on kywaert the hare the fresse wounde yet / ffor sothe my lord the kyng yf ye suffre this vnpunyshyd and lete hym go quyte that hath thus broken your peas / And wyl do no right after the sentence and Iugement of your men / your Chyldren many yeris hereafter shal be myspreysed and blamed therfore /

Sykerly panther sayd Isegrym ye saye trouthe / hit were good that right and Iustyse were don / for them that wolde fayn lyue in peas /

**How grymbart the dasse the fores  
susters sone spack for reynart and  
answerd to fore the kyng.  
capitulo. .iiii.**

**T**ho spack Grymbart the dasse / and was  
Reynarts suster sone with an angrey  
moed / Sir Isegrym that is euyl sayd it  
is a comyn prouerbe An Enemyes  
mouth / saith seeld wel / what leye ye / and wyte  
ye myn Eme Reynart / I wold that ye wolde a  
venture that who of yow tweyne had moste tres-  
paced to other sholde hange by the necke as a  
theef on a tree / But and yf he were as wel in  
this court and as wel wyth the kyng as ye be /  
it shold not be thought in hym / that it were  
ynowh / that ye shold come and aske him for-  
gyuenes ye haue byten and nypte myn vncle wyth  
your felle and sharp teeth many mo tymes than I  
can telle / yet wil I telle some poyntes that I wel  
knowe / knowe not ye how ye mysdeled on the  
plays / whiche he threwe doun fro the carre /  
whan ye folowed after fro ferre / And ye ete the  
good plays allone / and gaf hym nomore than the  
grate or bones / whyche ye myght not ete your  
self / In lyke wyse dyde ye to hym also of the  
fatte vlycche of bacon / whiche sauourd so wel /  
that ye allone ete in your bely / and whan myn  
Eme askyd his parte / tho answerd ye hym agayn  
in scorne / Reynart fayr yonglyng I shal gladly

gyue you your part / but myn eme gate ne had  
nought / ne was not the better / Notwithstanding  
he had wonnen the flycche of bacon wyth grete  
drede / for the man cam and threw hym in a  
sacke / that he scarsely cam out wyth his lyf /  
Suche maner thynges hath reynart many tymes  
suffred thurgh ysegrym.



ye lordes thynke ye that this is good / yet  
is ther more / he complayneth how that reynart  
myn eme hath moche trespaced to  
hym by cause of his wyf / Myn Eme hath leyn by  
her but that is wel seuen yer to fore / er he  
wedded her / and yf reynart for loue and curtosye  
dyde with her his wille / what was that / She was  
sone heled therof / hierof by ryght shold be no  
complaynt were Isegrym wyse. he shold haue lefte  
that he doth to hym self no worshyp thus to  
sklaundre his wyf / She playneth not / now  
maketh kywaert the hare acomplaynt also / that  
thynketh me a vyseuase / yf he rede ne lerned a  
ryght his lesson / sholde not reynard his maister  
bete hym therfore / yf the scolers were not beten  
ne smyten and reprised of their truantrye / they  
shold neuer lerne /



ow complayneth Courtoys that he with  
payne had gotten a puddyg in the  
wynter / at suche tyme as the coste is  
euyll to fynde Therof hym had be better to haue  
holde his pees / for he had stolen it / Male que-

sisti et male perdidisti hit is ryght that it be euil  
lost / that is euil wonne who shal blame Reynart /  
yf he haue taken fro a theef stolen good hit is  
reson who that vnderstandeth the lawe and can  
discerne the right / and that he be of hye burthe  
as myn Eme reynart is whiche knoweth wel how  
he shal resseyue stolen good / yet al had he cour  
toys hanged whan he fonde hym with the menowr /  
he had not moche mysdon no trespaced / Saut  
ayenst the crowne / that he had don Iustyse wyth  
oute leue wherfore for the honour of the kynge  
he did it not / all hath he but lytyl thanks / what  
skathed it hym that he is thus complayned on /  
Myn Eme is a gentil and a trewe man he may  
suffre no falshede / he doth nothyng but by his  
prestes counseyl And I saye yow syth that my  
lorde the kynge hath do proclamed his pees he  
neuer thoughte to hurte ony man / ffor he eteth no  
more than ones a day / he lyueth as a recluse / he  
chastiseth his body and wereth a sherte of heer /  
hit is more than a yere that he hath eten no  
flesshe / as I yesterday herd saye of them that cam  
fro hym he hath leste and geuen over his Castel  
maleperduys / And hath bylded a cluse / theryn  
dwelleth he / and hunteth nomore / ne desyreth  
no wynnynge but he lyueth by almesse and taketh  
nothyng but suche as men gyue hym for charyte  
and doth grete penance for his synnes / and his is  
woxen moche pale and lene of prayeng and  
wakyng ffor he wolde be fayn wyth god /

Thus as grymbert his eme stode and preched  
 thise wordes / so sawe they comen doun the hylle  
 to hem chauntecler the cock and brought on abiere  
 a deed henne of whom reynart had byten the heed  
 of / and that muste be shewed to the kynge for  
 to haue knowleche therof.

**How the Cocke complayned on  
 reynart capitulo .b<sup>o</sup>.**

**C**Hauntecler cam forth and smote py-  
 teously his handes and his fetheris and  
 on eche side of the byer wenten twayne  
 sorouful hennes that one was called  
 cantart and that other goode henne Crayant they  
 were two the fayrest hennes that were bytwene  
 holland and arderne / Thise hennes bare eche of  
 them a brennyng tapre whiche was longe and  
 straye / Thise two hennes were coppens susters /  
 And they cryed so pitously / Alas and weleaway  
 for the deth of her deresuster coppen / Two yonge  
 hennes bare the byere which kakled so heuily and  
 wepte so lowde for the deth of coppen their moder  
 that it was ferre herde / thus cam they to gydre to  
 fore the kynge /

**A**nd chantecler tho seyde / Mercyful lord /  
 my lord the kynge plese it yow to here our  
 complaynte / And abhorren the grete  
 scathe that reynart hath don to me and my chil-

dren that hiere stonden / it was so that in the  
 begynnynge of appryl whan the weder is fayr / as  
 that I as hardy and prowde / bycause of the grete  
 lynage that I am comen of and also hadde / ffor I  
 had viij fayr sones and seuen fayr doughters whiche  
 my wyf had hatched. and they were alle stronge  
 and fatte and wente in ayerde whiche was walled  
 round a boutte / In whiche was a shadde where in  
 were six grete dogges whiche had to tore and  
 plucked many a beestis skyn in suche wyse as my  
 chyl dren were not aferd / On whom Reynart the  
 thief had grete enuye by cause they were so sure  
 that he cowde none gete of them / how wel oftymes  
 hath this fel thief goon rounde aboute this wal /  
 and hath leyde for vs in suche wyse that the dogges  
 haue be sette on hym and haue hunted hym  
 away / And ones they leep on hym vpon the  
 banke / And that cost hym somewhat for his  
 thefte / I saw that his skyn smoked neuertheles  
 he wente his waye / god amende it /

**T**hus were we quyte of reynart a longe whyle /  
 atte laste cam he in lyknes of an here-  
 myte / and brought to me a lettre for to  
 rede sealed wyth the kynges seal / in whiche stode  
 wreton that the kyng had made pees oueral in  
 his royaume / and that alle maner beestis and  
 fowles shold doo none harme ner scathe to ony  
 other / yet sayd he to me more / that he was a

cloysterer or a cloyd recluse be comen / And that  
he wolde receyue grete penance for his synnes /  
he shewd me his slaayne and pylche and an heren  
sherte ther vnder / and thenne sayd he / syr  
Chaunteclere after thys tyme be no more aserd of  
me ne take no hede / ffor I now wil ete nomore  
flesshe / I am forthon so olde / That I wolde fayne  
remembre my sowle I will now go forth / for I  
haue yete to saye my sexte / none / and myn euen-  
songe / to god I bytake yow / Tho wente reynart  
thens sayeng his Credo / and leyde hym vnder an  
hawthorn / Thenne / was I glad and mery / and  
also toke none hede / And wente to my chyldren  
and clucked hem to gydre And wente wythout the  
wal for to walke wherof is moche harme comen to  
vs / for reynart laye vnder a busshe and cam  
krepynge bitwene vs and the gate / so that he  
caght one of my chyldren and leyd hym in his  
male / wherof whe haue had grete harme / for syth  
he hath tasted of hym / ther myght neuer hunter  
ne hounnde saue ne kepe hym from vs / he hath  
wayted by nyghte and daye in suche wyse that he  
hath stolen so many of my chyldren that of .xv. I  
haue but foure / in suche wyse hath this thief for-  
slongen them / And yet yesterday was coppen my  
doughter that hier lyeth vpon the byer with the  
houndes rescowed This complayne I to yow gra-  
cious kynge / haue pyte on myn grete and vnre-  
sonable damage and losse of my fayre chyldren /





reynart the foxe / Ther was concluded and apoynted  
for the beste / that reynart shold be sent ffore and  
that he lefte not for ony cause / But he cam in to  
the kynges court ffor to here wat shold be sayd to  
hym / And that bruyn the bere shold do the  
message.

the kyng thought that alle this was good and  
saide to brune the bere syr brune I wyl that ye  
doo this message / but see wel to for your self /  
ffor reynart is a shrewe / and felle and knoweth so  
many wyles that he shal lye and flatre / and shal  
thynke how he may begyle deceyue and brynge  
yow to some mockerye /

tho sayd brune what good lord late it allone /  
deceyueth me the foxe / so haue I ylle lerned my  
casus / I trowe he shal come to late to mocque me /  
Thus departed brune meryly fro thens / but it is to  
drede that he cam not so meryly agayn /

### how brunne the beere was sped of Reynart the foxe/ capitulo .viij<sup>o</sup>.



Ow is brune goon on his waye toward the  
foxe wyth astowte moede / whiche sup-  
posed wel that the foxe sholde not haue  
begyled hym / as he cam in a derke  
wode in a forest were as reynard had a bypath  
whan he was hunted / ther bysyde was an hie  
montayne and lande / and there muste brune in  
the myddel goon ouer for to goo to maleperduys /

for reynart had many a dwellyng place / but the  
castle of maleperduys was the beste and the fastest  
burgh that he had / Ther laye he Inne whan he  
had nede and was in ony drede or fere. Now  
whan bruyn was comen to maleperduys he fonde  
the gate fast shette / tho wente he to fore the gate  
and satte vpon his taylle and called Reynart be ye  
at home I am brownyng / the kynge hath sente me  
for yow that ye sholde come to court / for to plete  
your caas / he hath sworn there by his god / come  
ye not / or brynge I yow not with me for  
tabyde suche right and sentence as shal be there  
gyuen / it shal coste you your lyf he wyl hange  
you / or sette you on the ratte / reynart doo by my  
counseyl and come to the court /

**R**eynart laye within the gate as he ofte was  
wonte to doo for the warmth of the sonne /  
whan reynart herd bruyn tho wente he  
Inneward in to his hole / for maleperduys was ful  
of hooles / hier one hool and there an other and  
yonder an other / narowe. crooked and longe  
wyth / many weyes to goo out / whiche he opend  
and shette after that he had nede / whan he had  
ony proye brought home / or that he wiste that  
ony sought hym for hys mysdedes and trespaces /  
thenne he ran and hydde hym fro his enemyes in  
to hys secrete chambres / that they coude not fynde  
hym / by whiche he deceyuyd many a beest that  
sought hym / and tho thought reynart in hym self

how he myght best brynge the beere in charge and  
nede / and that he abode in worship /

**I**N this thoughte reynart cam out and sayde  
bruyn eme ye be welcome / I herde you  
wel to fore / but I was in myn eue  
song therfore haue I the lenger taryed a lytyl /  
dere eme he hath don to you no good seruyse and  
I can hym no thank that hath sente you ouer this  
longe hylle / for I see that ye be also wery that the  
swete renneth down by your chekys / it was no  
nede / I had neuerthe'ess comen to court to  
morowe but I sorowe now the lasse / for your wyse  
counseyl shal wel helpe me in the court / and  
coude the kyng fynde none lasse messenger but yow  
ffor to sende hyther / that is grete wonder / ffor  
next the kynge ye be the mooste gentyl and  
richest of leeuys and of lande / I wolde wel that  
we were now at the court but I fere me that I  
shal not conne wel goo thyder / for I haue eten so  
moche new mete / that me thynketh my bely wylle  
breke or cleue asonder and by cause the mete was  
nyewe / I ete the more /

tho spack the bere lyef neue what mete haue ye  
eten that maked yow so ful/

dere eme that I ete what myght it helpe yow  
that yf I tolde you / I ete but symple mete a poure  
man is no lord that may ye knowe eme by me / we  
poure folke must ete oftymes such as we gladly  
wolde not ete yf we had better / they were grete

hony combes which I must nedes ete for hunger /  
they haue made my bely so grete / that I can  
nowher endure /

Bruyn tho spack anone / alas reynart what saye  
ye / sette ye so lytyl by hony / me ought to preyse  
and loue it aboue alle mete / lief reynart helpe me  
that I myght gete a decl of this hony / and as  
longe as I lyue I shal be to you a tryew friende  
and abyde by yow as ferre as ye helpe me that I  
may haue a parte of this hony /

### How bruyn ete the hony capitulo. .biiij:

**B**Ruyn eme I had supposed that ye had  
iaped therwyth /  
so helpe me god reynart nay / I shold  
not gladly iape with yow /

thenne spacke the rede reynart is it thenne  
ernest that ye loue so wel the hony / I shal do  
late you haue so moche that ten of yow shold not  
ete it at one mele / myght I gete therwith your  
friendship /

not we ten reyner neue sayd the bere how  
shold that be had I alle the hony that is bytwene  
this and portyngale I shold wel ete it allone

reynard sayde what saye ye Eme / hier by  
dwelleth an husbondman named lantfert whiche  
hathe so moche hony that ye shold not ete it in  
vij. yere whiche ye shal haue in your holde. yf ye

wille be to me friendly and helpyng agenst myn  
enemyes in the kynges court /

thenne promysed bruyn the bere to hym. that  
yf he myght haue his bely full he wold truly be to  
hym to fore alle other a faythful frende /

herof laughed reynart the shrewe and sayde / yf ye  
wold haue vij hamber barelis ful I shal wel gete them  
and helpe you to haue them / These wordes pleyd  
the bere so wel and made him so moche to lawhe /  
that he coude not wel stande

Tho thought reynart / this is good luck I shal lede  
hym thyder that he shal lawhe by mesure.

Reynard sayd thenne / this mater may not be  
longe taryed / I muste payne my self for you / ye  
shal wel vnderstande the very yonste and good  
wyl that I bere to you ward I knowe none in al my  
lygnage that I nou wolde laboure fore thus sore /

that thanked hym the bere and thought he taryed  
longe /

Now eme late vs goo a good paas and folowe ye  
me / I shal make you to haue as moche hony as ye  
may bere / the foxe mente of goode strokes but the  
caytyf markyd not what the foxe mente / and they  
wente so longe to gydre that they cam vnto lant-  
ferts yerde / tho was sir bruyn mery /



ow herke of lantfert is it true that men saye  
/ so was lanifert a stronge carpenter of  
grete tymbre / and had brought that other  
day to fore in to his yerde a grete oke which he

had begonne to cleue And as men be woned he  
 had smeten two betels the rinone after that other in  
 suche wyse the oke was wyde open whereof  
 reynart was glad / for he had founde it right as he  
 wissed / And sayde to the bere all lawhyng / see  
 nou wel sharply to / in this tree is so moche hony  
 that it is without mesure / asaye yf ye can come  
 therin and ete but lytil for though the hony  
 combes be swete and good yet beware that ye ete  
 not to many. but take of them by measure. that  
 ye cacche no harme in your body for swete eme I  
 shold be blamed yf they dyde you ony harme.

what reynart cosyn sorowe ye not for me. wene  
 ye that I were a fole.

mesure is good in alle mete reynart sayde ye  
 saye trouthe. wherfore shold I sorowe goo to the  
 nde and Crepe theryn

brun the bear hasted sore toward the hony. and  
 trad in wyth his two formest feet: and put his  
 heed ouer his eeris in to the clyft of the tree. And  
 reynart sprang lyghtly and brak out the betle  
 of the tree. Tho helped the bere nether flatereng  
 ne chydeng. he was fast shette in the tree thus hath  
 the neuu wyth deceyte brought his eme in pryson  
 in the tree in suche wyse as he coude not gete  
 out wyth myght ne wyth crafte / hede ne foote /



hat prouffyteth brun the bere that he  
 stronge and hardy is / that may not helpe  
 them / he sawe wel that he begyled was he  
 began to howle and to braye / and crutched wyth

the hynder feet and made suche a noyse and  
 rumour that lantfert came out hastely / and knewe  
 nothyng what this myght be / and brought in his  
 hand a sharpe hoke / bruyn the bere laye in the  
 clyfte of the tree in grete fere and drede / and helde  
 fast his heed and nyped both his fore feet / he  
 wrange he wrestled / and cryed / and all was for  
 nought / he wiste not how he myght gete out /

reynar the foxe sawe fro ferre how that  
 lantfert the carpenter cam and tho spack reynart to  
 the bere / is that hony good how is it now / ete not  
 to moche it shold do you harme / ye shold not  
 thenne wel conne goo to the court whan lantfert  
 cometh yf ye haue wel eten he shal yeue you better  
 to drynke and thenne it shal not styke in your  
 throte /

**A**fter these wordes tho torned hym reynart  
 toward his castel and lantfert cam and fonde  
 the bere fast taken in the tree / thenne ranne  
 he faste to his neyghbours and sayde / come alle in  
 to my yerde / there is a beere taken / the worde  
 anone sprange oneral in the thorpe / ther ne bleef  
 nether man ne wyf / but alle ranne theder as  
 fast as they coude / eueryche wyth hys wepen /  
 some wyth a staf / some with a rake / some with a  
 brome / some with a stake of the hegghe and  
 some wyth a flayel / and the preest of the chirche  
 had the staf of the crosse / and the clerk brought a  
 vane The prestis wyf Iulok cam with her dystaf /

she sat tho and spanne / Ther cam olde wymen that  
for age had not one tooth in her heed /

now was bruyn the bere nygh moche sorowe /  
that he allone muste stande ayenst them alle whan  
he herde alle this grete noyse and crye / he wras-  
tled and plucked so harde and so sore / that he gate  
out his heed / but he lefte behynde all the skyne  
and bothe his eeris / In suche wyse that neuer man  
sawe fowller ne lothyer beest / for the blode ran  
ouer his eyen / and or he coude gete out his feet /  
he muste lete there his clawes or nayles and this  
roughe hande / This market cam to him euyl / ffor  
he supposed neuer to haue goon / is feet were  
so sore / and he myght not see for the blode whiche  
ran so ouer his eyen /

**T**antfert cam to hym wyth the preest and  
forth with alle the parysshe / and began to  
smyte and stryke sore vpon his heed and  
visage he receyued there many a sore stroke / euery  
man beware hierby. who hath harme and scathe /  
euery man wil be ther at and put more to / That  
was wel seen on the bere / for they were alle fiers  
and wroth on the bere grete and smal / ye  
hughelyn wyth the croked lege and ludolf with  
the brode longe noose / they were booth wroth  
That one had an leden malle and that other a  
grete leden wapper / therwyth they wapped and  
al for slyngred hym / syr bertolt with the longe  
fynghers lantfert. and ottram the longe. thys dyde to



the bere more harme than al the other that one had  
a sharpe hoke / and that other a croked staf wel  
leded on th ende for to playe at the balle /  
Baetkyn / ende aue abelquak my dame laue / and  
the preest with his staf / and dame Iulok his wyf  
thise wroughten to the bere so moche harme / that  
they wold fayn haue brought hym fro his lyf to  
deth / they smote and stacke hym al that they  
cowde /

bruyn the beere satte and syghed and groned /  
and muste take suche as was gyuen to hym / but  
lantfert was the worthiest of byrthe of them alle /  
and made moste noyse / for dame pogge of chaf-  
porte was his moder / and his fader was Macob  
the stoppelmaker / a moche stowte man there as  
he was allone / bruyn receyued of hem many a caste  
of stones / Tofore hem alle sprang forst lanteferts  
brother with a staf / and smote the bere on the  
heed that he ne herde ne sawe / and there with  
the bere sprange vp bytwene the bushe and the  
ryuer emonge an heep of wyuis that he threwe a  
deel of hem in the ryuer whiche was wyde and  
deep /

ther was the persons wyf one of them wherfor  
he was ful of sorow when he saw his wyf lye in  
the water / hym lusted no lenger to smyte the  
bere / but called dame Iuloke in the water now  
euery man see to / Alle they that may helpe her /  
be they men or wymen / I gyue to hem all pardon  
of her penance and relece alle theyr synnes / alle

they thenne lefte bruyñ the bere lye / And dyde  
that the preest badde

**W**han bruyñ the bere sawe that they ranne all  
from hym and ranne to saue the wymen /  
tho sprange he into the water and swame  
alle that he coude / Thenne made the preest a  
grete showte and noyse and ran after the bere  
wyth grete anger and said come and torne agayn  
thow false thief / The bere swame after the beste  
of the streme / and lete them calle and crye / for he  
was glad that he was so escaped from them / he  
cursed and banned the hony tree / and the foxe  
also that had so betrayed him / that he had  
copen therin so depe that he loste boothe his  
hood and his eeris / And so forth he droof in the  
streem wel a ij or iij myle / Tho waxe he so wery  
that he wente to lande for to sitte and reste hym /  
ffor he was heuy / he groned and syghed / and the  
blode lepe ouer his eyen / he drough his breth  
lyke as one sholde haue deyde /

**N**ow herke how the foxe dyde / er he cam  
fro lantferts hows he had stolen a fatte  
henne and had leyde her in his male And  
ranne hastely away by a by path were he wende  
that noman should haue comen / he ranne toward  
the Ryuer that he swette / he was so glad that he  
wist not whatto do for Ioye / ffor he hoped that  
the bere had be dede / he sayde / I haue now wel

spedde for he that sholde moste haue hyndred me  
 in the court is now dede / and none shal wyte me  
 therof / may I not thenne by right / be wel glad /  
 with thise wordes the foxe looked to the ryuer  
 ward and espyed where bruyn the bere laye and  
 rested him / Tho was the foxe sorier and heuyer  
 then to fore was mery / and was as angry and  
 sayde In chydyng to lantfert / alas lantfert lewde  
 fool god gyue hym a shames deth that hath loste  
 suche goode venyson whiche is good and fatte /  
 and hath late hym goo whiche was taken to his  
 hande many aman wolde gladly haue eten of  
 hym. he hath loste ariche and fatte bere / Thus al  
 chydyng he cam to the ryuer / where he fonde the  
 beere sore wounded / bebled / and right seke /  
 whiche he myght thanke none better thereof than  
 Reynart whiche spacke to the bere in skorne /

Chiere priestre / dieu vous garde wyll ye see  
 the rede thief

sayde the bere to hym self / the rybaud and  
 the felle diere here I se hym comen /

Thenne sayde the foxe / haue ye ought forgotten  
 at lantferts / haue ye also payd hym for the hony  
 combes that ye stale fro hym / yf ye haue not. it  
 were agrete shame and not honeste / I wyl rather  
 be the messenger my self for to goo and paye hym /  
 was the hony not / good / I knowe yet more of the  
 same prys. dere Eme telle me er I goo hens / In to  
 what ordre wille ye goo. that were this newe  
 hode / were ye amonke or an abbot. he that

shoef your crowne / hath nyped of your eeris /  
 ye haue lost your toppe And don of your  
 gloues / I trowe veryly that ye wyl go synge  
 complyn.

**A**lle this herde bruyn the bere / and wexe alle  
 angry and sory for he myght not a venge  
 hym / he lete the foxe saye his wylle And  
 wyth grete payne suffred it. and sterte agayn in  
 the ryuer / and swam down wyth the stream to that  
 other syde /

now muste he sorowe how that he sholde come  
 to the court / for he had lost his eeris / and the  
 skynne wyth the clawes of his forefeet / for though  
 a man sholde haue slayn hym he coude not go /  
 And yet he muste nedes forth / but he wist not how

Now here how he dyde. he satte vpon his  
 hammes / and began to rutsele ouer his tayl / and  
 whan he was so wery / he wentled and tombled  
 nyghe half a myle / this dyde he with grete payne  
 so longe tyl atte laste he cam to the courte. And  
 whan he was seen so comyng fro ferre / Some  
 doubted what it myght be that cam so wentelyng

The kynge atte laste knewe hym / and was not  
 wel payd and sayde This is bruyn the bere my  
 frende / lord god who hath wounded hym thus he  
 is passyng reed on his heed. me thynketh he is  
 hurte vnto the deth where may he haue ben.

ther wyth is the bere come to fore the kynge  
 and sayde /

The complaynt of the bere vpon  
the fore cap<sup>o</sup> ix<sup>o</sup>



complayne to yow mercyful lorde syre  
kyng / so as ye may see how that I am  
handled prayeng you t auenge it vpon  
reynart the selle beest<sup>r</sup> ffor I haue  
goten this in your seruyse. I haue loste bothe  
my formest feet / my chekes and myn eeris by  
his false deceyte and treson.

The kyng sayde how durst this fals theef  
Reynat doo this / I saye to yow bruyn and  
swere by my crowne / I shal so auenge you on  
hym / that ye shal conne me thanke /

he sente for alle the wyse beestis / and desired  
counseyl how that he myght auenge this ouer  
grete wronge / that the foxe had don / Thenne the  
counseyl concluded olde and yong / that he shold  
be sente fore and dayed earnestly again for  
tabyde suche Iugement as shold there be gyuen  
on hym of alle his trespasses And they thought  
that the catte tybert myght best do this message yf  
he wolde / for he is right wyse / The kyng thought  
this counceyl good /



How the kynge sente another  
tyme tybert the catte for the foxe,  
and how tybert spedde with reynart  
the foxe/ca° x°.

**T**henne the kynge saide sir tybert / ye  
shal now goo to reynart and saye to  
hym this seconde tyme that he come  
to court vnto the plee for to  
answere / for though he be felle to other beestis  
he trusteth you wel / and shal doo by your  
counseyl. and telle yf he come not / he shal haue  
the thirde warnyng and be dayed and yf he thenne  
come not / we shal procede by ryght ayenste hym  
and alle hys lygnage wythout mercy /

Tybert spack / My lord the kynge / they that  
this counseylde you were not my frendes what shal  
I doo there / he wil not for me neyther come ne  
abyde / I beseche you dere kynge sende some  
other to hym / I am lytyl and feble / bruyn the  
bere whiche was so grete and stronge / coude not  
brynge hym / how shold I thenne take it on  
honde /

nay said the kynge sir tybert ye ben wyse and  
wel lerned / Though ye be not grete / ther lyeth  
not on / many do more wyth crafte and connyng /  
than with myght and strengthe /

thenne said the catte / syth it muste nedes be  
don / I must thenne take it vpon me / god yeue

grace that I may wel achieue it / for my herte is  
 heuy / and euil willed therto /

Tybert made hym / sone redy towards maleper-  
 duys / and he saw fro ferre come fleynge one of seynt  
 maryns byrdes / tho cryde he lowde and saide al  
 hayl / gentyl byrde / torne thy wynges hether-  
 ward and flee on my right side / the byrde flew  
 forth vpon a tree whiche stode on the left side of  
 the catte / tho was tybert woo / for he thought  
 hit was a shrewd token and a sygne of harme / for  
 yf the birde had flownen on his right side / he had  
 been mery and glad / but now he sorowed that  
 his Iourney shold torne to vnhappe / neuertheles  
 he dyde as many doo / and gaf to hym self better  
 hope than his herte sayde / he wente and ronned to  
 maleperduys ward / and there he fonde the foxe  
 allone standynge to fore his hous /

**T**ybert saide / The riche god yeue you good  
 euen reynart / the kyng hath menaced  
 yow / for to take your lyf from yow / yf  
 ye come not now wyth me to the court /

The foxe tho spack and said / Tibert my dere  
 cosyn ye be right wel come / I wolde wel truly  
 that ye had moche good lucke / what hurted the  
 foxe to speke fayre / though he sayd wel / his  
 herte thoughte it not and that shal be seen / er  
 they departe /

reynart sayde wylle we this nyght be to gydre /  
 I wyl make you good chyre and to morow erly

in the dawnyng we wyl to gydre goo to the court /  
good neue late vs so doo / I haue none of my kyn /  
that I truste so moche to as to yow / hier was  
bruyne the bere the traytour he loked so shrewdly  
on me / and me thoughte he was so stronge / that  
I wolde not for a thousand marke haue goon with  
hym / but cosyn I wil tomorow erly goo with  
yow /

Tybert saide / it is beste that we now goo / for  
the mone shyneth also light as it were daye / I  
neuer sawe fayrer weder /

nay dere cosyn / suche myght meet vs by daye  
tyme / that wold make vs good chiere / and by  
nyghte paraenture myght doo vs harme / it is  
suspecyous to alke by nyghte. Therfore a byde  
this nyght here by me

Tybert sayde / wat sholde we ete / yf we  
abode here /

reynart sayde / here is but lytel to ete ye  
maye wel haue an hony combe good and swete /  
what saye ye / Tybert wyl ye ony therof.

tybert answerd I sette nought therby haue  
ye nothyng ellis yf ye gaf me a good fatte mows /  
I shold be better plesyd /

A fatte mows said reynard / dere cosyn what saye  
ye / here by dwelleth a preest and hath a barne  
by his hows ther in ben so many myse / that a mnn  
shold not lede them a way vpon a wayne / I haue  
herd the preest many tymes complayne that they  
dyde hym moche harme



O dere reyner lede me thyder for alle that I  
may doo for yow /

ye tybert saye ye me trouthe / loue ye wel myes/  
yf I loue hem wel said the catte / I loue myes  
better than ony thyng that men gyue me· knowe  
ye not that myes sauoure better than veneson / ye  
than flawnes or pasteyes wil ye wel doo. so lede  
me theder where the myes ben· and thenne shal  
ye wynne my loue. ye al had ye slayn my fader  
moder and alle my kyn.

Reynart sayd ye moke and Jape therwyth·  
the catte saide so helpe me god I doo not.

Tybert said the foxe wiste I that veryly I wolde  
yet this nyght make that ye shuld be ful of myes.  
reynart quod he· ful that were many.

tyberte ye Iape /

reynart quod he in trouth I doo not / yf I hadde a  
fatte mows / I wold not gyue it for a golden noble /  
late vs goo thenne / tybert quod the foxe I wyl  
brynge yow to the place / er I goo fro you /

reyner quod the foxe [*or rather the cat*] / vpon  
your sauf-conduyt / I wolde wel goo wyth you to  
monpelier /

late vs thenne goo said the foxe we tarye alto  
longe /

Thus wente they forth withoute lettyng to the  
place / where as they wold be to the prestes barne  
whiche was faste wallid aboute with a mude wal  
and the nyght to fore the foxe had broken in and  
had stolen fro the preest a good fatte henne /

and the preest alle angry had sette a gryn to fore the hool to auenge hym / for he wold fayn haue take the foxe / this knewe wel the felle theef the foxe And said sir tybert cosyn crepe in to this hool / and ye shal not longe tarye but that ye shal catche myes by grete heepis / herke how they pype. whan ye be ful / come agayn / I wil tarye here after you be fore this hole / we wil to morowe goo to gyder to the court. Tybert why tarye ye thus longe come of / and so maye we retorne sone to my wyf. whiche wayteth after vs / and shal make vs good chiere

Tybert saide / reynart cosyn is it thenne your counseyl that I goo in to this hole. Thise prestes ben so wyly and shrewyssh / I drede to take harme /

O ho tybert said the fox I sawe you neuer so sore aferde / what eyleth yow /

the catte was ashamed and sprange in to the hoole. And anon he was caught in the gryn by the necke er he wyste / thus deceyuyd reynart his ghest and cosyn /



As tybert was waer of the grynne / he was a ferde and sprang forth / the grynne wente to / thenne he began he to wrawen / for he was almost ystranglyd / he called he cryed and made a shrewd noyse /

reynart stode to fore the hool and herde al / and was wel a payed and sayde / tybert loue ye wel myes / be they fatte and good / knewe the preeste

herof or mertynet/they be so gentyl that they wolde  
 brynge yow sauce / Tybert ye synge and eten / is  
 that the guyse of the court / lord god yf ysegrym  
 ware there by yow in suche reste as ye now be  
 thenne shold I be glad / for ofte he hath don me  
 scathe and harme /

tybert coude not goo awaye / but he mawede and  
 galped so lowde / that martynet sprang vp / and /  
 cryde lowde / god be thanked my gryn hath taken  
 the theef that hath stolen our hennes / aryse vp we  
 wil rewarde hym /

**W**yth these wordes aroose the preest in an  
 euyl tyme and waked alle them that were  
 in the hows / and cryde wyth a lowede  
 vois / the foxe is / take

there leep and ranne alle that there was the  
 preest hym self ranne al moder naked / mertynet  
 was the first that cam to tybert / the preest toke to  
 locken his wyf an offryng candel and bad her lyght  
 it atte fyer / and he smote tybert with a grete staf /  
 Ther receyuid tybert many a grete stroke ouer alle  
 his body / mertynet was so angry that he smote the  
 catte an eye out / the naked preest lyfte vp and  
 shold haue gyuen a grete stroke to tybert / but  
 tybert that sawe that he muste deye sprange  
 bytwene the prestes legges wyth his clawes and  
 with his teeth that he raught out his ryght colyon  
 or balock stone / that leep becam yl to the preest  
 and to his grete shame.

**T**his thyngc fyl doun vpon the floer / whan  
 dame Iulocke knewe that / she sware by  
 her faders sowle / that she wolde it had  
 coste her alle th offryng of a hole yere / that the  
 preest had not had that harme hurte and shame /  
 and that it had not happed and said / in the  
 deuyles name was the grynne there sette / see mer-  
 tynnet lyef sone / this is of thy faders harneys /  
 This is a grete shame and to me a grete hurte / for  
 though he be heled herof yet he is but a loste man  
 to me and also shal neuer conne doo that swete  
 playe and game /

The foxe stode wythoute to fore the hole and  
 herde alle thyse wordes / and lawhed so sore that  
 he vnnethe coude stonde / he spack thus al softly /  
 dame Iulock be al styll / and your grete sorowe  
 synke / Al hath the preest loste one of his stones  
 it shal not hyndre hym he shal doo wyth you wel  
 ynowh ther is in the world many a chapel / in  
 whiche is rongen but one belle / thus scorned and  
 mocked the foxe / the prestes wyf dam iulock that  
 was ful of sorowe /

The preest fyl doun a swoune / they toke hym  
 vp and brought hym agayn to bedde. tho wente  
 the foxe agayn in to his borugh ward / and lefte  
 tybert the catte in grete drede and Ieopardye / for  
 the foxe wiste none other but that the catte was  
 nygh deed / but whan tybert the catte sawe them  
 al besy aboute the preest tho began he to byte and

gnawe the grenne in the myddel a sondre / and  
 sprange out of the hool and wente rollyng and  
 wentlyng towards the kyngs court or he cam theder  
 it was fayr day and the sonne began to ryse / And  
 he cam to the court as a poure wyght / he had  
 caught harme atte prestes hows by the helpe and  
 counseyl of the foxe / his body was al to beten /  
 and blynde on the one eye / when the kyng wyste  
 this / that tybert was thus arayed / he was sore  
 angry and menaced reynart / the theef sore / and  
 anone gadred his counseyl to wyte what they  
 wold auyse hym / how he myght brynge the foxe  
 to the lawe and howe he sholde be fette

**I**ho spack sir grymbart whiche was the foxes  
 suster sone and saide ye lordes / thowgh  
 my eme were twyes so bad and shrewessh /  
 yet is ther remedye ynough / late hym be don to /  
 as to a free man whan he shal be Iuged / he muste  
 be warned the thirde tyme for al and yf he come  
 not thanne / he is thenne gylty in alle the trespasses  
 that ben leyd ayenst hym and his or complayned  
 on /

grymbart who wolde ye that sholde goo and daye  
 hym to come / who wil auenture for hym his eeris /  
 hys eye or his lyf whiche is so fel a beest / I trowe  
 ther is none here so moche a fool /

grymbert spack / so helpe me god I am so  
 moche a fool / that I wil do this message myself  
 to reynart / yf ye wille commande me /

**How grymbert the dasse broughte  
the fore to the lawe to fore the kynge/  
capitulo .xj<sup>o</sup>.**

**N**ow go forth grymbart and see wel to fore  
yow reynart is so felle and fals and so  
subtyl / that ye nede wel to loke aboute  
yow / and to beware of hym /

Grimbert said he shold see welto /

thus wente grymbart to maleperduys ward / and  
when he cam theder / he fonde reynart the foxe at  
home / and dame ermelyn his wyf laye by her  
whelpis in a derke corner /

Tho spack grymberd and salewed his eme and  
his aunte / and saide to reynart eme beware that  
your absence hurte yow not in suche maters as be  
leyde and complayned on yow but yf ye thynke it  
good / it is hye tyme that ye come wyth me to the  
court / The wythholdyng you fro it can doo yow  
no good there is moche thyng complayned ouer  
you / and this is the thirde warnyng / and I telle  
you for trouth yf ye abyde to morow al day / ther  
may no mercy helpe you ye shal see that wyth in  
thre dayes that your hows shal be byseged al  
aboute / and ther shal be made to fore it galowes  
and racke / I saie you truly ye shal not thenne  
escape neyther with wyf ne wyth chylde / The  
kynge shal take alle your liuys fro yow / therfore  
it is beste that ye goo wyth me to the court / your

subtyl wyse counseyl shal paraurenture anyalle you /  
ther ben gretter auentures falle er this for it may  
happe ye shal goo quyte of all the complayntes  
that ben complayned on you / and alle your  
enemyes shal abyde in the shame / ye haue  
oftymes don more and gretter thingis than this.

**R** Eynart the foxe answerd / ye saye soth / I  
trowe it is beste that I goo wyth you for  
ther lacketh my counseyl paraurenture the  
kynge shal be mercyful to me yf I maye come  
to speke wyth hym / and see hym vnder his  
eyen / though I had don moche more harme /  
the court may not stonde without me / that shal  
the kyng wel vnderstande. Though some be so  
felle to me ward / yet it goth not to the herte /  
alle the counseyl shal conclude moche by me /  
where grete courtes ben gadred of kynges or of  
grete lordes / where as nedeth subtyl counseyl /  
ther muste reynart fynde / the subtyl meanes /  
they maye wel speke and saye theyr aduys but  
the myne is beste / and that goth to fore alle  
other / in the courte ben many that haue sworn  
to doo me the werst they can / and that causeth  
me a parte to be heuy in my herte / ffor many  
maye doo more than one allone / that shal hurte  
me / neuertheles neuwe it is better I goo wyth  
yow to the court and answer for my self / than  
to sette me / my wyf / and my chylde in a  
venture for to be loste / aryse vp late vs goo

hens / he is ouer myghty for me / I muste doo as  
he wylle / I can not better it I shal take it  
patiently and suffre it.

**R**Eynert saide to his wyf dame ermelyn I  
betake yow my chyldren that ye see wel  
to hem / and specyally to reynkin my  
ynogest sone / He belyketh me so wel I hope he  
shal folowe my stappes And ther is rosell apassyng  
fayr theef / I loue hem as wel as ony may loue  
his chyldren / Yf god gyue me grace / that I  
maye escape I shal whan I come agayn thanke  
yow wyth fair wordes Thus toke Reynart leue of  
his wyf /

A gods / how sorouful a bode ermelyn wyth  
her smale whelpis / ffor the vytayller and he that  
sorowed for malperduys was goon his way / And  
the hows not pourueyed ne vitaylled.

### How reynard shroef hym capitulo. xij.

**H**an reynart and grymbert had goon a  
whyle to gydre / tho saide reynart /  
dere cosyn now am I in grete fere / for  
I goo in drede and ieopardye of my  
lyf / haue so moche repentaunce for my synnes  
that I wil shryue me dere cosyn to yow / here is  
none other preest to gete yf I were shryuen of my  
synnes / my soule shold be the clerer /



grymbert ansuerde / Eem wil ye shryue you /  
thenne muste ye promyse firste to leue your  
steelyng and rouynge

reynart saide that wiste he wel / now herke dere  
cosyn what I shal saye / Confiteor tibi pater of  
alle the mysdedes that I haue done / And gladly  
wil receyue penance for them /

Grymbert sayde what saye ye / wylle ye shryue  
yow / thenne saye it in englissh that I may under-  
stande. yow

reynart sayde / I haue trespaced ayenst alle the  
beestis that lyue in especyal ayenst bruyne the bere  
myn Eem whom I made his crowne al bloody /  
And taughte tybert the catte to catche myes for I  
made her leepe in a grenne wher she was al to  
beten / also I haue trespaced gretly ayenst chan-  
teclere with his children / for I haue made hym  
quyte of a grete dele of hem

**T**he kynge is not goon al quyte / I haue  
sklandred hym and the quene many  
tymes / that they shal neuer be cleer  
therof yet haue I begyled ysegrym the wulf after  
than I can telle wel I called hym eme / but that  
was to deceyue hym / he is nothing of my kyn /  
I made hym a monke / Eemare / where I  
my self also becam one / And that was to his  
hurte and no prouffyte / I made bynde his feet to  
the belle rope / the ryngyng of the belle thought  
hym so good that he wolde lerne to ryng wherof

he had shame / ffor he range so sore that alle the  
folke in the strete were aferd therof and meruayl-  
led what myght be on the belle / And ranne thyder  
to fore he had comen to axe the religyon / wher-  
fore he was beten almost to the deth / after this I  
taught hym to catche fyssh where he receyuid  
many a stroke / also I ledde hym to the richest  
prestes hows that was in vermedos / This preest  
had aspynde wherin henge many a good flitche of  
bacon / wherin many a tyme I was wonte to fyl  
my bely / in this spynde I had made an hole / in  
whiche I made ysegrym to crepe / There fonde he  
tubbes with beef and many goed flytches of bacon  
whereof he ete so moche withoute mesure / that  
he myght not come out at the hole where he wente  
in / his bely was so grete and ful of the mete /  
and whan he entred his bely was smal / I wente  
in to the village and made there a grete showte  
and noyse / yett herke what I dyde thenne I  
ranne to the preest wher he satte at the table and  
ete / And hadde to fore hym as fatte capone as a  
man myght fynde / that capone caught I and  
ranne my weye wherwith al that I myghte / the  
preest cryed out and said / take and slee the foxe /  
I trowe that neuer man sawe more wonder / the  
foxe cometh in my hows and taketh my capoone  
fro my table / where sawe euer man an hardyer  
theef / and as me thought he toke his table knyf  
and casted it at me / but he touched me not I  
ranne away / he shoof the table from hym / and

folewed me cryeng kyllle and slee hym / I to goo  
and they after and many moo cam after which  
alle thought to hurte me /

**I**Ranne so longe that I cam where as  
isegrym was / and there I lete falle the  
capoone / for it was to heuy for me /  
and'ayenst my wille I lefte it there / and thenne  
I sprange thurgh an hole where as I wolde be /  
and as the preest toke vp the capone. he espyed  
isegrym and cryde smyte down here frendes here  
is the thief the wulf / see wel to that he escape vs  
not. they ranne alle to gydre wyth stokkes and  
staues and made a grete noyse that alle the  
neyghbours camen oute. and gauen hym many  
a shrewde stroke / and threwe at hym grete  
stones / in suche wyse that he fyl down as he  
had been deed / They slepid hym and drewe  
hym ouer stones and ouer blockes wythout the  
village and threwe hym in to a dyche and  
there he laye al the nyght / I wote neuer how  
he cam thens / syth I haue gotten of hym / for as  
moche as I made hym to fylle his bely / that he  
sware that he wolde be myn helpe an hole yere.

**H**o ledde I hym to a place where I tolde  
hym ther were vij. hennes and a cocke  
whiche satte on a perche and were moche  
fatte / And ther stode a faldore by / and we  
clymmed ther vp / I sayde to hym yf he wolde

bileue me / and that he wolde crepe in to  
 the dore / he sholde fynde many fatte hennes /  
 Isegrym wente al lawhyng to the dore ward  
 and crope a lityl in / and tasted here and  
 there / and at laste he sayde to me reynarde ye  
 borde and iape with me / for what I seche I fynde  
 not thenne said I / eme yf ye wyl fynde crepe  
 forther in / he that wil wynne / he muste laboure  
 and auenture / They that were wonte to sytte  
 there / I haue them a waye thus I made hym to  
 seche ferther in / and shooue him forth so ferre /  
 that he fylle doun vpon the floer for the perche  
 was narow / and he fill so grete a falle / that they  
 sprange vp alle that slepte / and they that laye  
 nexte the fyre cryden that the valdore was open  
 and somthyng was falle and they wiste not wat  
 it myght be /

**T**hey roose vp and lyghte a candel / and  
 whan they sawe hym they smeton beten  
 and wounded hym to the deith / I haue  
 broughte hym thus in many a iepardye / moo than  
 I gan now rekene / I sholde fynde many moo /  
 yf I me wel bythoughte / whiche I shal telle you  
 here after / Also I haue bydryuen wyth dame  
 erswynde his wyf / I wolde I had not don it / I  
 am sory for it / hit is to her grete shame / and  
 that me repenteth /

grymbert saide / Eme I vnderstande you not /  
 he sayde I haue trespaced with his wyf /

ye shryue you / as though ye helde somewhat  
 behynde / I wote not what ye mene ne where  
 ye haue lerned this langage /

Ach dere eme it were grete shame yf I shold  
 saye it oppenly as it happed / I haue leyen by  
 myn aunte / I am your eme I shold angre you yf  
 I spak vylanye of wymmen / neuue now haue I  
 tolde yow alle that I can thynke on / sette me  
 penaunce / and assoylle me / ffor I haue grete  
 repentaunce /

**G**rymbert was subtyl and wyse / he brake a  
 rodde of a tree and saide / eme now shal  
 ye smyte your self thryes with this rodde  
 on your body / And thenne leye it doun vpon the  
 grounde / and sprynge thre tymes ther ouer with-  
 out bowyng of your legges and wythout stom-  
 blyng / and thenne shul ye take it vp and kysse it  
 frendly in token of mekenes and obedience of  
 your penance that I gaf yow / herwith be ye quyte  
 of alle synnes that ye haue don to this day for I  
 forgeue it yow al /

The foxe was glad /

tho sayd grymbert to his eme / Eme see now  
 forthon / that ye doo good werkis / rede your  
 psalmes / goo to chirche / faste and kepe your  
 halydayes / and gyue your allmesse / and leue  
 your synful and yl lyf / your thefte and your treson  
 and so maye ye come to mercy /

the foxe promysed that he wold so doo / and

thenne wente they bothe to gydre to the court  
ward /



Lytel besyde the waye as they wente stode  
a cloyster of back nonnes. where many  
ghees / hennes and capones wente with-  
oute the walles / and as they wente talkynge the  
foxe brought grymberte out of the right waye  
thyder and wythout the walles by the barne went  
the polayle / The foxe espyed them and saw a  
fatte yong capone whiche wente allone fro his  
felaws / and leep and caught hym that the fethers  
flew aboute his eeris but the capone escaped /

grymbert sayde what eme cursyd man what wil  
ye doo / wille ye for one of thise poletes falle  
agayn in alle your synnes of whiche ye haue  
shryuen yow / ye ought sore repente you /

reynart answerd / truly cosyn I had al forgotten /  
praye god that he forgeue it me for I wil neuer do  
so more /

thenne torned they agayn ouer alityl brydge /  
yet the foxe alway lokyd after the polaylle / he  
coude not refrayne hym self / that whiche cleuid  
by the bone / myght not out of the flesshe / though  
he shold be hanged / he coude not lete the lokyng  
after the polayll as fer as he myght see them /

Grymbert sawe his maner and sayde / fowle  
false deceyuour / how goo your eyen so after the  
poleyll /

The foxe sayde / cosyn ye mysdoo to saye to me

ony suche wordes / ye brynge me out of my deu-  
cion and prayers / late me saye apater noster ffore  
alle the sowles of polaylle and ghes that I haue  
betrayed / and ofte wyth falsheed stolen from  
thyse holly nonnes /

Grymbert was not wel a payd but the foxe had  
euer his eyen toward the polayl / til atte laste they  
cam in the waye agayn. And thenne torned they  
to the courte warde / how sore quaked tho reynard  
when they aproched the court / ffor he wiste wel  
that he had for to answeere to many afowle feet and  
theft that he had doon /

**How the foxe cam to the court /  
and how he excused hym to fore the  
kyng / capitulo .xiiij<sup>o</sup>**



**A**T the first when it was knowen / in the  
court that reynart the foxe and grym-  
baert his cosyn were comen to the  
court / Ther was none so poure nor so  
feble of kynne and frendes / but that he made hym  
redy for to complayne on reynart the foxe /

reynart loked as he had not ben aferd / and  
helde hym better / than he was for he wente forth  
proudly with his neuu thurgh the hiest street of  
the courte / right as he had ben the kynges sone  
and as he had not trespaced to ony man the value  
of an heer / and wente in the mydel of the place  
stondyng to fore noble the kyng and sayde / God

gyue yow grete honour and worship / Ther was  
 neuer kyng / that euer had a trewer seruant / than  
 I haue ben to your good grace and yet am.  
 Neuertheles dere lorde I knowe wel that ther ben  
 many in this courte that wolde destroye me yf  
 yewold byleue them / but nay god thanke yow /  
 hit is not fyttyng to youre crowne to byleue thise  
 false deceyuars and lyars lyghtly / To god mote it  
 be complayned / how that thise false lyars and  
 flaterers now adayes in the lordes courtes ben moste  
 herde and byleuyd / the shrewes and false deceyuers  
 ben borne vp for to do to good men alle the harme  
 and scath they maye / Our lorde god shal ones  
 rewarde them their hyre /

the kyng sayde / pees reynard false thief and  
 traytour / how well can ye brynge forth fayr talis /  
 And alle shalle not helpe yow a strawe / wene ye  
 wyth suche flateryng wordes to be my frende / ye  
 haue so ofte seruyd me soo as ye now shal wel  
 knowe / The pees that I haue comanded and  
 sworn / that haue ye wel holden / haue ye /

chauntecler coude no lenger be styлле but cryde  
 alas what haue / I by this pees loste /

be styлле chaunteclere holde your mouth late me  
 answeere this fowle thief /

**T**How shrewd felle thief saide the kyng /  
 thou saist that thou louest me wel that  
 hast thou shewd wel on my messagers  
 these poure felaws / Tibert the cat and brun the



bere / whiche yet ben al bloody whiche chyde not  
ne saye not moche / but that shal this day coste  
the thy lyf / In nomine pater· criste. filij.

sayd the foxe dere lord and myghty kyng· yf  
bruyns crowne be bloody / what is that to me /  
when he ete hony at lantferts hows in the vyllage  
and dyde hym hurte and scathe / there was he  
beten therfore yf he had willyd he is so stronge of  
lymmes / he myght wel haue be auengid er he  
sprang in to the water / Tho cam tybert the catte  
whom I receyued frendly / yf he wente out without  
my counseyl for to stele myes to a prestes hows /  
and the preest dyde hym harme sholde I abyde  
that thenne myght I saye I were not happy / not  
so my liege lorde / ye may doo what ye wille /  
thowh my mater be cleer and good. ye may siede  
me / or roste / hange. or make me blynde. I may  
not escape yow. we stonde alle vnder your cor-  
reccion. ye be myghty and stronge. I am feble /  
and my helpe is but smal / yf ye put me to the  
deth. hit were a smal vengeance /

whiles they thus spack. sprange vp bellyn the  
rame and his ewe dame olewey and saide my lord  
the kynge here oure camplaynt / bruyn the bere  
stode vp wyth al his lygnage and his felaws.  
Tibert the catte Isegrym the wulf. kywart the  
hare / and panther the boore· the camel and brunel  
the ghoos the kyde and ghoot / boudewyn the asse.  
borre the bulle / hamel the oxe. and the wesel.  
Chantecler the cock. pertelot wyth alle theyr

children all thise made grete rumour and noyse.  
And cam forth openly to fore their lorde the  
kynge. And made that the foxe was taken and  
arested /

**How the foxe was arested and  
Iuged to deth capitulo 'xliii°**

**E**re vpon was a parlament / and they  
desired that reynart sholde ben deed  
and what somme euer they sayden  
ayenst the foxe / he answerde to eche to  
them / neuer herde man of suche beestis / suche  
playntis of wyse counseyl / and subtyl Inuencions  
and on that other syde / the foxe made his excuse  
so wel and formably theron that they that herde  
it wondred therof / they that herde and sawe it /  
may telle hit forth for trouthe / I shalshorte the  
mater and telle yow forth of the foxe / The kyng  
and the counseyl herd the witnessis of the com-  
playntes of reynarts mysdedes / hit went with  
hem as it ofte doth the feblest hath the worst /  
They gafe sentence and Iudged that the foxe  
shoulde be dede and hanged by the necke / tho  
lyfte not he to pleye alle his flatteryng wordes /  
and deceytes coud not helpe hym / The Iugement  
was gyuen and that muste be don / grymbert his  
neueu / and many of his lignage myght not fynde  
in their hertes to see hym dye but token leue  
soroufully / and romed the court.

**H**he kynge bithoughte hym and marked how  
 many a yonglyng departed from thens al  
 wepyng / whiche were nyghe of his kynne /  
 and sayde to hym self / hier behoueth other  
 counseyl herto / Though reynart be a shrewe /  
 ther be many good of his lignage /

thybert the catte sayde / sir bruyn and sir  
 Isegrym / how be ye thus slowe. it is almost  
 euen / hier ben many bussches and hedges. yf he  
 escaped from vs. and were delyuerd out of this  
 paryl he is so subtyl and so wyly and can so many  
 deceytes that he shold neuer be taken agayn /  
 shal we hange hym how stonde ye al thus er the  
 galewis can be made redy it shal be nyght /

Isegrym bethought hym tho and seyde / hier by is  
 a gybet or galewis / And wyth that worde he sighed/  
 and the catte espyed that and sayde / Isegrym  
 ye be aferd / ys it ayenst your wylle / thynke ye  
 not that he hym self wente and laboured that  
 bothe your brethern were hanged / were ye good  
 and wyse ye sholde thanke hym / and ye sholde  
 not therwith so longe tarye /

**H**ow the fore was ledde to the  
 galewis / cap<sup>o</sup> \*rb\*

**I**segrym balked and sayde / ye make  
 moche a doo sir tyberte hadde we an  
 halter which were mete for his necke  
 and strong ynough / we shold sone  
 make an ende /

reynert the foxe whiche longe had not spoken /  
saide to Isegrym shorte my payne / Tyberte hath  
a stronge corde whiche caughte hym in the prestes  
hous / whan he bote of the prestes genytoirs /  
he can clyme wel and is swyft late hym bere vp /  
the lyne / Isegrym and bruyn thys becometh yow  
wel that ye thus doo to your neuw / I am sory  
that I lyue thus longe / haste you ye be sette  
therto / it is euyl doo that ye tarye thus longe /  
goo to fore bruyn and lede me Isegrym folowe  
fast. and see wel to and be ware that reynart go  
not away.

tho sayd bruyn it is the best counseil that I  
euer yet herde / that reynart there seith

Isegrym commanded anon and badde his kyn  
and frendes. that they sholde see to reynart that  
he escaped not. ffor he is so wyly and fals. They  
helden hym by the feet. by the berde. and so  
kepte hym that he escaped not from hem /

The foxe herde alle thyse wordes / whiche  
touchid hym nygh / yet spak he and sayde / Och  
dere eme / me thynketh ye payne your self sore /  
for to doo me hurte and scathe / yf I durste I  
wolde pay you of mercy / though my hurte and  
sorow is playsant to you / I wote wel yf myn  
aunte your wyf bethought her wel of olde ferners.  
she wolde not suffre that / I shold haue ony  
harne / but now I am he / that now ye wille  
doo on me what it shal please yow / ye bruyn and  
thibert / god gyue you shames deth but ye doo

to me your werst / I wote wherto I shal / I  
may deye but ones I wolde that I were dede  
al redy I sawe my fader deye he had sone  
donne /

Isegrym sayde late vs goo / ffor ye curse vs bi  
cause we lengthe the tyme / euyl mote he fare yf  
we abyde ony lenger /

he wente forth wyth grete enuye on that one side  
and bruyn stode on the other syde / and so lede  
they hym forth to the galowes warde / Tybert  
ranne with a good wil to fore / and bare the corde  
and his throte was yet sore of the grynne / and his  
cropp dyde hym woo of the stryke that he was  
take in that happed by the counseil of the foxe /  
and that thought he now to quyte /

**T**ybert ysegrym and bruyn wente hastily  
wyth reinert to the place / there as the  
felons ben wonte to be put to deth / Nobel  
the kynge and the quene / and alle that were in  
the court folowed after for to see the ende of  
reynart / the foxe was in grete drede yf hym  
myshapped / and bethought hym ofte / how he  
myghte saue hym fro the deth / And tho thre  
that so sore desireden hys deth how he myght  
deceyue them / and brynge them to shame / and  
how he myght brynge the kynge wyth lesyngis ffor  
to holde with hym ayenst hem / This was alle that  
he studyed / how he myght putte away his sorowe

wyth wyls / And thought / thus though the kynge  
 and many one be vpon me angry / it is no wonder  
 for I haue wel deseruid it / neuertheles I hope for  
 to be yet hir best frende / And yet shal I neuer do  
 them good / how strong that the kynge be / and  
 how wyse that his counseil be / yf I may brouke  
 my wordes / I knowe so many an inuencion / I  
 shal come to myn aboue / as fer as they wolde  
 comen to the galewes /

**T**ho saide ysegrym / sir bruyn thinke now on  
 your rede crowne whiche by reynarts mene  
 ye caughte we haue now the tyme that we  
 may wel rewarde hym / Tybert clyme vp hastily  
 and bynde the corde faste to the lynde / and make  
 a rydyng knotte or a strope / ye be the lyghtyst /  
 ye shal this day see your wylle of hym. Bruyn see  
 wel to that he escape not, and holde faste. I will  
 helpe that the ladder be sette vp / that he may goo  
 vpwart theron.

bruyn said. do. I shal helpe hym wel

The foxe sayde now may my herte be wel heuy for  
 grete drede. ffor I see the deth to fore myn eyen.  
 and I may not escape. my lorde the kynge and  
 dere quene and forth alle ye that here stande. er  
 I departe fro this world I pray you of a bone.  
 that I may to fore you alle make my confession  
 openly and telle my defaultes also clerly that my  
 sowle be not a-combred / and also that noman

here after / bere no blame for my thefte ne for my  
treson my deth shal be to me the esyer / and praye  
ye alle to god that he haue mercy on my sowle.


**How the fore made openly his  
confession to fore the kynge and to  
fore al them that wold here it**  
cap° xvi°

**A**lle they that stoden there had pyte whan  
reynart saide tho wordis and said it  
was / but a lytyl requeste yf the kynge  
wolde graunte it hym / and they prayde  
the kynge to graunte it hym /

The kynge gaf hym leue /

reynart was wel glad and hoped that it myght  
falle better / And said thus / now helpe spiritus  
domini / for I see hier noman but I haue trespaced  
vnto / Neuertheles yet was I vnto the tyme that I  
was wened fro the tete / one the best chylde that  
coude ouwher be founden / I wente tho and pleyde  
wyth the lambes by cause I herde hem gladly  
blete / I was so longe wyth hem that at the laste  
I bote one / there lerned I fyrst to lapen of the  
bloode hit sauourd wel / me thought it right good  
And after I began to taste of the flessch / therof I was  
lycoursous / so that after that I wente to the gheet  
in to the wode / there herde I the kyddes blete  
and I slewe of them tweyne / I began to waxe

hardy after I slewe hennes / polayl and ghees /  
 where euer I founde hem. Thus worden my teeth  
 al bloody after this I wexe so felle and so wroth /  
 That what somme euer I founde that I myght  
 ouer / I slowe alle / Ther aftercam I by Isegrym  
 now in the wynter / where he hydde hym vnder a  
 tree. And rekened to me that / he was myn eme  
 whenne I herde hym thenne rekene allvance we  
 becomen felaws whiche I may wel repente / we  
 promysed eche to other to be trewe and to vse  
 good felawship / and began to wandre to gyder /  
 he stal the grete thynges and I the smalle and all  
 was comyn bytwene vs / yet he made it so that he  
 had the beste dele I gate not halfe my parte /  
 whan that ysegrym gate a calf / a ramme or a  
 weder thenne grimmed he / and was angry on me  
 and droof me fro hym / and held my part and his  
 to / so good is he.

 Et this was of the leste / but whan it so  
 lucked that we toke an oxe or a cowe /  
 thenne cam therto his wyf wyth. vij.  
 children so / that vnto me myght vnnethe come  
 one of the smallest rybbes / and yet had they eten  
 alle the flessch therof / ther with all muste I be  
 content not for that I had so grete nede. ffor I  
 haue so grette scatte and good of syluer and of  
 gold that seuen waynes shold not conne carye it  
 away /

whan the kynge herde hym speke of this grete



good and riches he brenned in the desyre and  
couetyse therof and sayde reynart where is the  
rychesse becomen / telle me that

the foxe saide my lord I shal telle yow / the  
rychesse was stolen / and had it not bestolen / it  
shold haue cost yow / your lyf and shold haue  
ben muredred whiche god forbede and shold haue  
ben the gretest hurte of the worlde /

whan the quene herde that she was sore aferde  
and cryde lowde / alas and weleaway reynart what  
say ye / I coniure yow by the longe waye that  
yoursoule shal goo / that ye telle vs openly the  
trouthe herof as moche as ye knowe of this grete  
murdre that sholde haue be doon on my lorde /  
that we alle may here it

now herkene how the foxe shal flatre the kyng  
and quene / and shal wynne bothe their good  
willes and loues And shal hyndre them that  
laboure for his deth / he shal vnbynde his packe  
and lye and by flaterye and fayr wordes shal  
brynge forth so his maters / that it shal be  
supposed for trouthe /

**I**N a sorouful contenance spack the foxe to  
the quene I am in suche caas now that I  
muste nedes deye / and hadde ye me not so  
sore coniured / I wil not Ieoparde my sowle / and  
yf I so dyde I shold goo therfore in to the payne  
of helle / I wil saye nothyng but that I wil make  
it good / for pytously he shold haue ben murthred

of his owen folke. neuertheles they that were most pryncypal in this feat. were of my next kynne· whom gladly I wold not bewraye. yf the sorrow were not of the helle.

The kynge was heuy of herte and saide / reynart saiste thou to me the trouthe.

ye said the foxe. see ye not how it standeth with me. wene ye that I wil dampne my sowle. what shold it auaylle me yf I now saide other wise than trouthe. my deth is so nyghe· ther may nether prayer ne good helpe me Tho trembled the foxe by dyssymlyyng as he had ben a ferde

The quene had pyte on hym. And prayde the kyng to haue mercy on hym in eschewyng of more harme / and that he sholde doo the peple holde their peas and gyue the foxe Audience. and here what he shold saye /

Tho commanded the kynge openly that eche of them shold be styлле / and suffre the foxe to saye vnberisped what that he wolde.

thenne saide the foxe / be ye now alle styлле. syth it is the kynges wille. and I shal telle you openly this treson. And therin I wil spare noman that I knowe gylty.



How the fore brought them in  
daunger / that wolde haue brought  
hym to deth. and how he gate the  
grace of the kyng. capitulo .xviij<sup>o</sup>:



Ow herkene how the foxe began. in the  
begynnyng he appeled grymbert his  
dere cosyn. whiche euer had holpen  
hym in his nede / he dyde so bycause  
his wordes sholde be the better hyleued. and that  
he forthon myght the better lye on his enemyes /  
thus began he firste and saide.

my lorde my fader had founden kyng ermeryks  
tresour doluen in a pytte. and whan he had thys  
grete good. he was so prowde and orguillous that  
he had alle other beestis in despyte whiche to fore  
had been his felaws he made tybert the catte to  
goo in to that wylde lande of ardenne to bruyne the  
bere for to do to hym homage. and bad hym saye  
yf he wolde be kynge that he shold come in to  
flaundres / bruyne the bere was glad hierof / ffor he  
had longe desired it / And wente forth in to  
flaundres where my fader receyued hym right  
frendly / anone he sente for the wyse grymbert  
myn neuewe / And for ysegrym the wulfe / and  
for tybert the catte / Tho these fyue camen  
bytwene gaunt and the thorpe callyd yfte / there  
they helden their counseyl an hole derke nyght

longe / what wyth the deueis helpe and craft and  
 for my faders richesse they concluded / and swore  
 there the kyngys deth / now herkene and here this  
 wonder the foure sworn vpon ysegryms crowne /  
 that they sholde make bruyn a kynge and a lorde /  
 And brynge hym in the stole at akon and sette  
 the crowne on his heed / and yf there were ony of  
 the kynges frendes or lignage / that wolde be  
 contrarye or ayenst this / hym sholde my fader  
 wyth his good and tresour fordryue and take from  
 hym his myght and power /

**I**T happed so that on a morowtyde erly  
 that grymbert my neuw was of wyne  
 almost dronke / that he tolde it to dame  
 sloepcade his wif in counseyl / and badde her  
 kepe it secrete / but she anone forgate it / and  
 saide it forth in confession to my wyf / vpon and  
 heth where they bothe wenten a pylgremage / but  
 she muste firste swere by her trouthe and by the  
 holy thre kynges of coleyne that for loue ne for  
 hate she sholde neuer telle it forth but kepe it  
 secrete but she helde it not / and kepte it no lenger  
 secrete but tyl she cam to me / and she thenne  
 tolde to me alle that she herde / but I muste kepe  
 it in secrete / and she tolde me so many tokenys /  
 that I felte wel it was trouthe and for drede and  
 fere myn heer stode right vp / and my herte be-  
 cam as heuy as leed / and as colde as Ise / I  
 thought by this a lyknesse whiche hier a fore

tyme byfille to the frosshis / whiche were free /  
 and complayned that they had none lorde / ne  
 were not bydwongen / for a comynthe without a  
 gouuernour was not god / and they cryden to  
 god with a lowde voys / that he wolde ordeyne  
 one that myght rewle them / this was al that they  
 desired / god herde theyr requeste / for it was re-  
 sonable and sente to them a storke / whiche ete  
 and swolowed them in as many as he coude  
 fynde / he was alway to hem vnmercyful / tho  
 complayned they theyr hurte / but then it was  
 to late / they that were to fore free and were a  
 ferde of no body / ben now bonde and muste obeye  
 to strengthe theyr kyng / hyer fore ye riche and  
 poure I sorowed that it myght happen vs in lyke  
 wyse/

**T**Hus my lord the kyng I haue had sorowe  
 for yow wherof ye can me but lytyl thanke  
 / I knowe bruyn the bere for suche a shrewe  
 and rauener / wherfor I thoughte yf he were kyng  
 we shold be alle destroyed and loste / I knowe our  
 souerain lord the kyng of so hye byrthe / so  
 myghty so benygne and mercyful / that I thought  
 truly it had ben an euyl chaunge for to haue a  
 foule stynkngye theef and to refuse a noble myghty  
 stately lyon / ffor the bere hath more madde folye  
 in his vnthrifty heed and al his auncestis / than  
 any other hath / thus had I in myn herte many a  
 sorowe / and thought alway how I myght breke

and fordoo my faders fals counseyl whiche of a  
 chorle and a traytour and worse than a theef wolde  
 make a lorde and a kynge / alway I prayd god  
 that he wolde kepe our kyng in worship and good  
 helthe and graunte hym long lyf / but I thought  
 wel yf my fader helde his tresour / he shold with  
 his fals felaws wel fynde the waye that the kyng  
 shold be deposed and sette a syde / I was sore be-  
 thought how I myght beste wyte where my faders  
 good laye / I a wayted at al tymes as nygh as I  
 coude / in wodes in bushes in feeldis / where my  
 fader leyde his eyen / were it by nyghte or by  
 daye / colde or weet I was alway by hym to espye  
 and knowe where his tresour was leyde /



N a tyme I laye down al plat on the  
 grounde / and sawe my fader come ren-  
 nyng out of an hole / Nowe herke  
 what I sawe hym doo / whan he cam out of the  
 hole / he loked fast a boutte yf ony body had seen  
 hym / And whan he coude nowher none see / he  
 stopped the hole with sande and made hit euen  
 and playn lyke to the other grounde by / he knewe  
 not that I sawe it / and where his footspore stood/  
 there stryked he with his tayl and made it smothe  
 with his mouth that noman should espye it / that  
 lerned I there of my fals fader and many subtyli-  
 tees that I to fore knewe nothyng of / thenne de-  
 parted he thens and ran to the village warde for

to do his thyngis / and I forgate not but sprange  
 and lepe to the hole ward / and how wel that he  
 had supposed that he had made al faste I was not  
 so moche a fool but that I fonde the hole wel /  
 and cratched and scraped with my feet the sande  
 out of the hole / and crepte therin / there fonde I  
 the moste plente of siluer and of golde that euer I  
 sawe / hier is none so olde that euer so moche  
 sawe on one heep in alle his lyf / Tho toke I erme-  
 lyne my wyf to helpe / and we ne rested nyght  
 ne day to bere and carye a waye with grete labour  
 and payne this riche tresour in to another place  
 that laye for vs better vnder an hawe in a depe  
 hole / in the mene whyle that myn husewyf and I  
 thus labouryd my fader was with them that wolde  
 betraye the kynge / now may ye here what they  
 dede / bruyne the bere and ysegrym the wulf sente  
 alle the londe a boutte / yf ony man wolde take  
 wages / that they shold come to bruyne / and he  
 wolde paye them their souldye or wagis to fore.  
 my fader ranne alle ouer the londe and bare the  
 lettres. he wist lytil that he was robbed of his  
 tresour. ye though he myght haue wonnen al the  
 world. he had not conne fynde a peny thereof.



han my fader hadde ben oueral in the lande  
 bytwene the elue and the somme. And  
 hadde gotten many a souldyour that shold  
 the next somer haue comen to helpe bruyne. tho

cam he agayn to the bere and his felowis. and tolde them in how grete a venture he had be to fore the borughes in the londe of saxone / and how the hunters dayly ryden and hunted with houndes after hym in suche wise that he vnnethis escaped with his lyf / whan he had tolde this to thise foure false traytours / thenne shewde he them lettres that plesyd moche to bruyn there in were wretoun xij. C. of ysegryms lignage by name withoute the beres / the foxes / the cattes and the dassen / alle thise had sworn that wyth the first messenger that shold come for them they shold be redy and come for to helpe the bere / yf they had their wages a moneth ta fore / This aspyed I / I thanke god / after thise wordes my fader wente to the hole where his tresour had leyn and wold loke vpon it / tho began he a grete sorowe / that he soughte he fonde nothyng / he fonde his hole broken and his tresour born away / there dede he that I may wel sorowe and bewaylle / for grete anger and sorowe he wente and hynge hym self / thus abode the treson of bruyn by my subtylte after / Now see myn Infortune / thise traytours ysegrym and bruyn / ben now most preuy of counseyl aboute the kynge / and sytte by hym on the hye bouche / And I poure reynart haue no thanke ne reward / I haue buried myn owen fader by cause the kynge sholde haue his lyf / my lorde saide the foxe / where ben they that so wolde doo / that is to destroye them self for to kepe yow /



**H**e kynge and the queene hoped to wyne  
the tresour and wyth oute counceyl toke to  
them reynart and prayed hym that he wold  
do so wel as to telle them were this tresour was /

reynart saide how shold I telle the kynge or  
them that wold hange me / for loue of the tray-  
tours and murderers whiche by her flaterye wolde  
fayne brynge me to deth / shold I telle to them  
where my good is / thenne were I out of my  
wytte /

The quene tho spak nay reynart the kynge shal  
lete you haue your lyf / and shal al to gydre for-  
gyue you / and ye shal be frohens forth wyse and  
true to my lorde.

the foxe answerd to the quene. dere lady yf the  
kynge wil beleue me and that he wil pardone and  
forgyue me alle my olde trespasses ther was neuer  
kynge so riche as I shal make hym for the tresour  
that I shal doo hym haue / is right costely and  
may not be nombred /

The kynge saide ach dame. wille ye beleue the  
the foxe. sauf your reuerence he is borne to robbe  
/ stele and to lye / this cleuid to his bones and  
can not be had out of the flessch /

the quene saide / nay my lorde ye may now well  
byleue hym / though he were to fore felle / he is  
now chaunged otherwise than he was ye haue wel  
herde that he hath appechid hi sfader and the dasse  
his neuw / whiche he might wel haue leyde on

other bestes / yf he wold haue ben false / felle /  
and a lyar /

The kynge saide dame wille ye thenne haue it  
soo / and thynke ye it best to be don / though I  
supposed it sholde hurte me / I wille take alle  
thise trespasses of reynart vpon me / and bileue his  
wordes / But I swere by my crowne / yf he euer  
here after mysdoo and trespass / that shal he dere  
abye and alle his lignage vnto the. ix. degree.

The foxe loked on the kyng stoundmele and  
was glad in his herte / and saide my lorde / I were  
not wyse / yf I sholde say thyng that were not  
trewe

The kynge toke vp a straw fro the ground / And  
pardoned and forgaf the foxe alle the mysdedes and  
trespaces of his fader and of hym also /

yf the foxe was tho mery and glad it was no  
wonder / ffor he was quyte of his deth and was  
alle free and franke of alle his enemyes /

**H**e foxe saide my lord the kynge and noble  
lady the quene god rewarde yow / thys  
grete worship that ye do to me / I shal  
thynke and also thanke you for hit / in suche wise  
that ye shal be the richest kynge of the world /  
ffor ther is none lyuyng vnther the sonne / that I  
vouchesauf better my tresour on / than on yow  
bothe /

Thenne toke the foxe vp a straw and profred it  
to the kyng / and saide my moste dere lord plese it

yow to receyue hie the ryche tresour whiche kynge  
ermeryk hadde / for I gyue it vnto you wyth a fre  
wylle / and knowleche it openly /

The kynge receyuid the straw and threwe it  
meryly fro hym with a Ioyous visage / And thanked  
moche the foxe /

The foxe laughed in hym self.

The kynge thenne herkened after the counseyl  
of the foxe. And alle that ther were / were at hys  
wylle /

**M**y lorde sade he / herkene and marke wel  
my wordes / in the west side of flaundes  
ther standeth a woode and is named hul-  
sterlo / And a water that is called krekennyth lyeth  
therby / This is so grete a wyldernesse / that ofte  
in an hole yere man ner wyf cometh therin / sauf  
they that wil / and they that wille not eschewe it /  
There lyeth this tresour hydde / vnderstande wel  
that the place is called krekennyth / for I aduise you  
for the leste hurte / that ye and my lady goo bothe  
thyder / ffor I knowe none so trewe that I durste  
on your behalue truste wherfore goo your self /  
And whan ye come to krekennyth ye shal fynde  
there two birchen trees standyng alther next the  
pytte / my lorde to tho byrchen trees shal ye goo /  
there lyeth the tresour vnther doluen / There  
muste ye scrape and dygge a way a lytyl the mosse  
on the one side / Ther shalle ye fynde many a Iewel  
of golde and syluer. and there shal ye fynde the

crowne which kynge Ermeryk ware in his dayes  
 that sholde bruyn the bere haue worn yf his wyl  
 had gon forth ye shal see many a costly Iewel  
 with riche stones sette in golde werk whiche coste  
 many a thousand marke / My lorde the kynge  
 whan ye now haue alle this good / how ofte shal  
 ye saye in your herte and thynke / O how true art  
 thou reynart the foxe. that with thy subtyl wytte  
 daluyst and hyddest here this grete tresour / god  
 gyue the good happe and welfare where euer  
 thou bee /

**I** He kynge sayde / sir reynart ye muste come  
 and helpe vs to dygge vp this tresour / I  
 knowe / not the way / I sholde neuer conne  
 fynde it / I haue herde ofte named / parys / london  
 akon and coleyn / As me thynketh this tresour  
 lyeth / right as ye mocked and Iaped / for ye  
 name kryekenpyt / that is afayned name /

these wordes were not good to the foxe / and he  
 sayd wyth an angry mode / and dissymyled and  
 saide / ye my lord the kynge / ye be also nyghe  
 that as fro rome to maye / wene ye that I wille  
 lede yow to flomme iordyn' / Nay I shal brynge  
 you out of wenying and shewe it you by good  
 wytnes /

he called lowde kywart the hare / come here to  
 fore the kynge The bestes sawe alle thyder ward  
 and wondred what the kynge wold / the foxe sayde  
 to the hare / kywart ar ye a colde / how tremble

ye and quake so / be not a ferd / and telle my lorde  
the kynge here the trouthe / And that I charge  
you by the fayth and trouthe that ye owe hym and  
to my lady the quene of suche thyng. as I shal  
demaunde of you /

Kywaert saide I shal saye the trouthe though I  
shold lose my necke therfore / I shal not lye ye  
haue charged me so sore / yf I knowe it /

Thenne saye / knowe ye not where kriecken pyt  
standeth / is that in your mynde /

The hare saide / I knew that wel. xij. yer a  
goon / wher that stondeth / why aske ye that. It  
stondeth in awoode named hulsterlo vpon a  
warande in the wyldernesse / I haue suffred there  
moche sorowe for hunger and for colde / ye  
more than I can telle / Pater symonet the friese  
was woned to make there false money / wherwyth  
he bare hym self out and al his felawship / but that  
was to fore er I had felawship wyth ryn the hounde  
whyche made me escape many a daunger / as he  
coude wel telle yf he were here / and that I neuer  
In my dayes trespaced ayenst the kynge other wyse  
than I oughthe to doo with right /

reynart sayd to hym go agayn to yonder felaw-  
ship here ye kyward / my lorde the kynge  
desyreth nomore to knowe of yow /

the hare retorned and wente agayn to the place  
he cam fro.

The foxe sayde my lord the kynge is it trewe  
that I saide / ye reynart said the kynge / ffor gyue

it me / I dyde euyl that I beleuid you not / Now  
 reynart frende fynde the waye that ye goo wyth  
 vs to the place and pytte / where the tresour  
 lyeth /

the foxe saide it is a wonder thyng wene ye that  
 I wolde not fayne goo with yow / yf it were so  
 wyth me that I myght goo wyth yow / in suche  
 wise that it no shame were vnto your lordshyp / I  
 wold goo but nay it may not bee / herkene what  
 I shal saye and muste nedes thaugh it be to me  
 vylonye and shame / whan Isegrym the wulf in  
 the deuels name wente in to religion and become  
 a monke shorn in the ordre / though the prouende  
 of sixe monkes was not suffycient to hym / and  
 had not ynough to ete he thenne playned and  
 waylled so sore / that I had pyte on hym / for he  
 becam slowe and seke / and by cause he was of  
 my kynne I gaf hym counceyl to renne away and  
 so he dyde / wherfore I stonde a cursed and am in  
 the popes banne and sentence I wil to morow  
 bytymes as the sonne riseth take my waye to rome  
 for to be assoyled and take pardon and fro rome  
 I wil ouer the see in to the holy lande and wil  
 neuer retorne agayn till I haue doon so moche  
 good that I may with worship goo wyth yow / hyt  
 were grete repref to you my lord the kyng / in  
 what londe that I accompanied you that men  
 shold saye ye reysed and accompanied your self  
 with a cursyd and persone agrauate /

The kyng sayde sith that ye stande a cursyd

in the censures of the churche yf I wente wyth  
yow / men sholde arette vilonye vnto my crowne /  
I shal thenne take kywaert or somme other to go  
with me to kryekenpytte / and I counseylle you  
reynart that ye put you your self out of this  
curse /

my lord quod the foxe / therfore wylle I goo to  
rome as hastely as I may / I shall not reste by  
nyght ner day til I bee assoylled /

reynart said the kynge / me thynketh ye ben  
torned in to a good waye / god gyue you grace  
taccomplyssh wel your desyre /



ssone as this spekyng was don / noble the  
kyng wente and stode vpon an hygh stage  
of stone / And commanded sylence to alle  
the bestes / and that they shulde sytte down in a  
rynge rounde vpon the grasse eueriche in his  
place after his estate and byrthe / reynart the foxe  
stode by the quene / whom he ought wel to loue /

Thenne said the kynge / here ye alle that be  
poure and riche yong and olde that stondest here /  
reynart one of the heed offycers of my hows had  
don so euyl whiche this daye shold haue been  
hanged / hath now in this courte don so moche /  
that I and my wyf the quene haue promysed to  
hym our grace and frendshyp / The quene hath  
prayde moche / for hym / in so moche that I haue  
made pees wyth hym / And I gyue to hym his  
lyf and membre / freely agayn / and I comande

you vpon your lyf / that he doo worship to /  
 reynart his wyf and to his chyldren / where som-  
 euere ye mete hem by day or night / and I wil  
 also here nomoo complayntes of reynard / yf he  
 hath hier to fore mysdon and trespaced / he wil  
 nomore mysdo ne trespace / but now bettre him /  
 he wylle to morowe / erly goo to the pope for  
 pardone and foryeuenes of alle hys synnes and  
 forth ouer the see to the holy lande / and he wil  
 not come agayn til he brynge pardon of alle his  
 synnes /

This tale herde tyselyn the rauen / and leep to  
 ysegrym / to bruyn / and to tybert there as they  
 were / and saide ye caytyfs / how goth it now /  
 ye vnhappy folke what do ye here / reynard the  
 foxe is now asquyer and a courtier and right grete  
 and myghty in the court / The kynge hath skylled  
 hym quyte of alle his brokes and forgyuen hym  
 all his trespasses and mysdedes / And ye be alle  
 betrayed and apechyd /

ysegrym saide how may this be / I trowe tyselyn  
 that ye lye

I do not certaynly saide the rauen /

Tho wente the wulf and the bere to the kynge  
 Tybert the catte was in grete sorowe he was so  
 sore a ferde / that for to haue the foxes frendship /  
 he wold wel forgyue reynard the losse of his one  
 eye that he loste in the prestes hows / he was so  
 woo / he wist not what to doo / he wolde wel that  
 he neuer had seen the foxe /



**How the wulf and the bere were  
arestyd by the labour of reynart the  
fore capitulo .xviij<sup>o</sup>.**



Segrym cam proudly ouer the felde to fore the kynge / and he thanked the quene / and spack wyth afelle moed ylle wordes on the foxe / in suche wise that the kynge herde it / and was wroth and made the woulf and the bere anon to be arestyd / ye sawe neuer wood dogges do / more harme / than was don to them they were bothe fast bounden so sore that alle that nyght / they myght not ster hande ne foot / They myght scarsely rore ne meue ony Ioynte / Now here how the foxe forth dyde / he hated hem / he laboured so to the quene that he gate leue for to haue as moche of the beres skyn vpon his ridge as a foote longe and a foot brode for to make hym therof a scryppe / thenne was the foxe redy yf he had foure stronge shoon / now here how he dyde for to gete these shoon /

he said to the quene / madame I am youre pylgrym / here is myn eme sir Isegrym that hath .iiij. stronge shoon whiche were good for me / yf he wolde late me haue two of them I wolde on the waye besyly thynke on your sowle / ffor it is ryght that a pylgrym shold alway thynke and praye for them that doo him good / Thus maye ye doo your sowle good yf ye will. And also yf ye myght gete of

myn aunte dame eerswyn also two of her shoon to  
gyue me / she may wel doo it / ffor she gooth but  
lytil out / but abydeth alway at home /

thenne sayde the quene / reynard yow behoueth  
wel suche shoes / ye may not be wythout them /  
they shal be good for you to kepe your feet hool  
for to passe with them many a sharpe montayn and  
stony roches / ye can fynde no better shoes for  
you / than suche as Isegrym and his wif haue and  
were / they be good and stronge / though it sholde  
touche their lyf eche of them shal gyue you two  
shoes for to accomplissh wyth your hye pilgrim-  
age /

**How psegrym and his wyf ere-  
stwyn muste suffre her shois to be  
plucked of / And how reynard dyde  
on the shoyes for to goo to come  
wyth / capitulo                   ·xix<sup>o</sup>.**



Hus hath this false pylgrym gotten fro  
Isegrym ij shooes fro his feet / whiche  
were haled of the clawes to the senewis  
ye sawe neuer foule that men rosted  
laye so styll / as Isegrym dyde / when his shoes  
were haled of / he styred not / and yet his feet  
bledde / thenne whan Isegrym was vnshoed / Tho  
muste dame eerswyn his wyf lye down in the grasse

wyth an heuy chere / And she loste ther her  
hynder shoes.

Tho was the foxe glad and said to his aunte in  
scorne / My dere aunte how moche sorow haue ye  
suffred for my sake / whiche me sore repenteth /  
sauf this / herof I am glad for ye be the lyeuest of  
alle my kyn / Therefore I wyl gladly were your  
shoen / ye shal be partener of my pylgremage /  
and dele of the pardon that I shal with your shoen  
fecche ouer the see /

dame erswyne was so woo that she vnnethe  
myghte speke / Neuertheles this she saide / A  
reynart that ye now al thus haue your wyl / I pray  
god to wreke it /

ysegrym and his felaw the bere helden their pees  
and wheren al styll / they were euyl at ease / for  
they were / bounden and sore wounded had tybert  
the catte haue ben there / he shold also somwhat  
haue suffred / in suche wyse / as he sholde not  
escaped thens wythout hurte and shame.



He next day whan the sonne aroos reynard  
thenne dyde grece his shoes whiche he had  
of ysegrym and erswyn his wyf / and dyd  
hem on and bonde hem to his feet / and wente to  
the kynge and to the queene and said to hem with  
a glad chere / Noble lord and lady god gyue you  
good morow and I desire of your grace that I may  
haue male and staff blessyd as belongeth to a  
pilgrym

Thenne the kyng anone / sent for bellyn the  
ramme / and whan he cam he saide / sir bellyn ye  
shal do masse to fore reynart / for he shal goo on  
pylgrymage / and gyue to hym male and staf /

the ram answerd agayn and said / my lord I dare  
not do that / for he hath said that he is in the  
popes curse /

The kyng said / what therof / mayster gelys  
hath said to vs / yf a man had doo as many synnes  
as al the world / and he wold tho synnes forsake /  
shryue hem and resseyue penance / and do by the  
prestes counseyl / god wil forgyue them and be  
merciful vnto hym now wil reynard goo ouer the  
see in to the holy lande and make hym clere  
of al his synnes /

Thenne ansuerd bellyn to the kyng I wil not  
doo litil ne moche herin / but yf ye saue me harm-  
les in the spirituel court byfore the byssshop pren-  
delor and to fore his archedeken loosuynde / and to  
for sir rapiamus his offycal /

The kyng began to wexe wroth and saide / I  
shal not bydde you so moche in half a yere / I had  
leuer hange yow than I shold so moche praye you  
for it /

whan the rame sawe that the kyng was angry /  
he was so sore aferd that he quoke for fere / and  
wente to the awter and sange in his bookes and  
radde suche as hym thought good ouer reynart /  
whiche lytyl sette ther by / sauf that he wold haue  
the worship therof



han bellyn the ramme had alle sayd his  
 seruyse deuoutly / thenne he hynged on the  
 foxes necke / a male couerd with the skynne  
 of bruyn the bere / and a lytil palster therby. tho  
 was reynart redy toward his Iourney. tho loked  
 he toward the kynge as he had ben sorowful to  
 departe and fayned as he had wepte. right as he  
 hadde yamerde in his herte but yf he had any  
 sorow it was bycause al the other that were there  
 were not in the same plyght as the wulf an bere  
 were brought in by hym. neuertheles he stood  
 and prayd them alle to praye for hym. lyke as he  
 wold praye for them the foxe thought that he  
 taryed longe and wold fayn haue departed for he  
 knewe hym self gylty /

the kynge saide reynart I am sory ye be so  
 hasty / and wil no lenger tarye /

nay my lord / it is tyme / for me ought not  
 spare to doo wel / I pray you to gyue me leue to  
 departe I muste doo my pylgremage /

the kynge sayd / god be wyth yow / and com-  
 manded alle them of the court to go and conueyne  
 reynart on his way sauf the wulf and the bere /  
 whyche fast laye bounden / ther was none that  
 durst be sory therfore / and yf ye had seen  
 reynart how personably he wente wyth hys male  
 and palster on his sholder and the shoes on his  
 feet / ye shold haue laughed / he wente and shewde  
 hym outeward wysely / But he laughed in his  
 herte that alle they brought hym forth / whiche

had a lytyl to fore been with. hym so wrooth / And  
also the kynge whiche so moche hated hym / he  
had made hym suche a fool that he brought hym  
to his owne entente he was a pylgrym of deux  
aas.

**M**Y lord the kyng sayd the foxe I pray you to  
retorne agayn I wil not that ye goo ony  
ferther with me. ye myght haue harme  
therby. ye haue there two morderars arestyd / yf  
they escape you. ye myght be hurt by them y pray  
god kepe you fro mysauenture wyth these wordes  
he stode vp. on his afterfeet. And prayde alle the  
beestys grete and smal that wolde be parteners of  
his pardon that they shold praye for hym /

They sayde that they alle wolde remembre  
hym /

Thenne departed he fro the kynge so heuily  
that many of them ermed /

Thenne said he to kyward the hare / and to  
bellyn th ramme meryly / dere frendes shal we  
now departe / Ye wil and god will accompanye me  
ferther / ye two made me neuer angry / ye be good  
for to walke wyth / courtoys / frendly and not  
complayned on of ony beeste ye be of good con-  
dicions / and goostly of your lyuyng / ye lyue  
bothe as I dyde / whan I was a recluse / yf ye haue  
leeuis and gras ye be plesyd / ye retche not of  
brede / of flesshe / ne suche maner mete

with suche flateryng wordes hath reynard thise

two flatred / That they wente wyth hym tyl they  
camen to fore his hows / maleperduys /

**How kywart the hare was slayn  
by the fore / cap<sup>o</sup> .xx<sup>o</sup>**



Han the foxe was come to fore the yate  
of his hows he sayde to bellyn the  
ramme / cosyn ye shal abide here  
withoute / I and kywart wille goo in /  
ffor I wille praye kywart to helpe me to take my  
leue of ermelyn my wyf / and to conforte her and  
my chydren /

bellyn sayde I praye hym to conforte them wel /  
wyth suche flateryng wordes brought he the hare  
in to his hole in an euyl hour / There fonde they  
dame ermelyn lyeng on the grounde with her  
yonglyngis / whiche had sorowed moche ffor drede  
of reynarts deth / but whan she sawe hym come  
she was glad / but whan she sawe his male and  
palster / and espyed his shoes / she meruailled and  
sayd dere reynerd how haue ye spedd /

he sayd I was arestid in the court / But the  
kynge let me gon / I muste goo a pilgremage /  
Bruyn the bere and ysegrym thew ulf they be  
plegge for me. I thanke the kyng / he hath  
gyuen to vs kywart hier / ffor to doo with hym  
what we wyl / The kyng saide hym self that  
kywart was the first that on vs complayned / And

by the fayth that I owe yow I am right wroth on kywart /

whan kywart herde thise wordes he was sore aferde / He wold haue fledde / but he myght not / ffor the foxe stode bytwene hym and the yate / And he caught hym by the necke / Tho cryed the hare helpe bellyn helpe / Where be ye This pilgryme sleeth me / but that crye was sone doon / for the foxe had anon byten his throte a two /

Tho sayd he late vs go ete this good fatte hare / the yonge whelpes cam also / Thus helde they a great feste / ffor kywart had a good fatte body / ermelyn ete the flessch and dranke the blood / she thanked ofte the kynge that he had made them so mery / The foxe saide ete as moche as ye maye / he wil paye for it / yf we will feche it.



He sayd reynart I trowe ye mocke / telle me the trouthe how ye be departed thens /

dame I haue so flaterid the kynge and the quene / that I suppose the frendship bytwene vs shal be right thynne whan he shal knowe of this / he shal be angry / and hastely seke me for to hange me by myne necke / Therfore late vs departe and stele secretly a way in somme other foreste / Where we may lyue wythoute fere and drede / and there that we may lyue vij yere and more and fynde vs not / there is plente of good mete of partrychs / wododekkis and moche other wilde fowle / dame and yf ye wil come with



me thyder / ther ben swete welles and fayr and clere  
 rennyng brokes / lord god how swete eyer is there /  
 There may we be in pees and ease and lyue in  
 grete welthe / ffor the kyng hath lete me gon by  
 cause I tolde hym that ther was grete tresour in  
 krekenpyt / but there shal he fynde nothyng  
 though he sought euer / This shal sore angre hym  
 whan he knoweth that he is thus deceyuid what  
 trowe ye how many a grete lesynge muste I lye /  
 er I coude escape from hym / It was harde that I  
 escaped out of pryson / I was neuer in gretter  
 paryl ne nerrer my deth / but how it euer goo / I  
 shal by my wille neuer more come in the kynges  
 daunger / I haue now gotten my thombe out of his  
 mouth / that thanke I my subtylyte.

**D**Ame ermelyne saide reynart I counseyle that  
 we goo not in to another foreste / where  
 we sholde be strange and elenge we haue  
 here al that we desyre / And ye be here lorde of  
 our neyghbours / wherfore shalle we leue this  
 place / And auenture vs in a worse / we may abyde  
 her sure ynough / yf the kyng wold doo vs ony  
 harme or besiege vs / here ben so many by or  
 side holes / in suche wyse as we shal escape from  
 hym / in abydyng here / we may not doo amys / we  
 knowe alle bypathes ouer alle / and er he take vs  
 with myght / he muste haue moche helpe therto but  
 that ye haue sworn that ye shal goo ouersee and  
 abide there / that is the thyng that toucheth me moste.

nay dame care not therfore / how more for  
 sworn / how more forlorn / I wente ones with a  
 good man / that said to me / that a bydwongen  
 oth' or oth sworn for force. was none oth. Though  
 I wente on his pilgremage it shold not auaylle me  
 a cattes tayl. I wil abyde here and folowe your  
 counseyl / yf the kyng hunte after me. I shal  
 kepe me as wel as I maye. yf he be me to  
 myghty. yet I hope wyth subtylte to begyle hym.  
 I shall vnbynde my sack. yf he wil seche harm he  
 shal fynde harme.



Ow was bellyn the ramme angry that  
 kywart his felawe was so longe in the  
 hole / and called lowde. come out kywarte  
 in the deuels name. how longe shal reynart kepe  
 you there / haste you and come late vs goo /

when reynard herde this' he wente out and saide  
 softly to bellyn the ramme. lief bellyn wherfore be  
 ye angry kywart speketh wyth his dere aunte. me  
 thynketh ye ought not to be dysplesid therfore. he  
 bad me saye to yow ye myght wel go to fore.  
 And he shal come after' he is lighter of fote than  
 ye. he muste tarye a whyle wyth his aunte and  
 her chyldren. they wepe and crye by cause I shal  
 goo fro them /

bellyn sayde' what dyde kyward. me thoughte  
 cryed after helpe /

the foxe answerd / what saye ye bellyne wene  
 ye that he shold haue ony harme / now herke

what he thenne dyde / whan we were comen in to  
myn hows / and ermelyn my wyf vnderstode that I  
shold goo ouer see she fyl down in a swoun and  
whan kywart sawe that / he cryed loude bellyn  
come helpe myn aunte to brynge her out of her  
swoun

thenne sayde the ramme In fayth I vnderstode  
that kywart had ben in grete daunger /

the foxe sayde / nay truly / or kyward shold  
haue ony harme in my hows / I had leuer that my  
wyf and chyl dren shold suffre moche hurte /

**How the foxe sente the heed of  
kywart the hare to the kyng by bel-  
lyn the ramme. capitulo xxj<sup>o</sup>.**

**T**He foxe saide / bellyn remembre ye not  
that yesterday the kyng and his coun-  
seyl commanded me that er I shold  
departe out of this lande / I shold  
sende to hym two lettres. dere cosyn I pray you to  
bere them. they be redy wretton.

the ramme sayde I wote neuer yf I wiste that  
your endyttyng and wrytyng were good / ye myght  
pareuenture so moche praye me that I wold bere  
them / yf I had ony thyng to bere them in /

reynarde saide ye shal not fayle to haue som  
what to bere them in / rather than they shold be  
vnborn I shal rather gyue yow my male that I

bere. and put the kynges lettres therin. and hange them aboute your necke ye shal haue of the kyngre grete thanke therfore and beryghtwelcomen to hym.

hier vpon bellyn promysed hym to bere thise lettres

tho retorned reynart in to his hows and toke the male and put therin kywarts heed and brought it to bellyn for to brynge hym in daunger / And henge it on his necke / and chargyd hym not for to loke in the male / yf he wolde haue the kyngis frendship and yf ye wil that the kyng take you in to his grace and loue you / saye that ye your self haue made the lettre and endited it / and haue gyuen the counseyl that it is so wel made and wreton / ye shal haue grete thank therfore /

bellyn the ramme was glad herof and thought he shold haue grete thank and saide reynarde I wote wel that ye now doo for me / I shal be in the court gretly preysed whan it is knowen that I can so wel endyte and make alettre / though I can not make it / ofte tymes it happeth that god suf-freth somme to haue worship and thanke of the labouris and connyng of other men / and so it shal bifalle me now / Now what counseyle ye reyner / shal kywart he hare come wyth me to the court /

nay sayd the foxe / he shal anone folowe yow / he may not yet come / for he muste speke wyth his aunte /



Ow goo ye forth to fore / I shal shewe to  
kywart secrete things whiche ben not yet  
knownen /

bellyn sayde fare wel reynart / and wente hym  
forth to the court / and he ran and hasted so faste  
that he cam to fore mydday to the court / and  
fonde the kynge in his palays wyth his barons /  
the kynge meruaylled whan he saw hym brynge  
the male agayn whiche was made of the beres  
skyn / the kyng saide saye on bellyn fro whens  
come ye / where is the foxe / how is it that he hath  
not the male with hym /

bellyn sayd my lord I shal saye yow al that I  
knowe / I accompayned reynard vnto his hows /  
And whan he was redy he asked me yf I that  
wold ffor your saacke bere two. lettres to yow / I  
saide for to do you playsir and worship / I wold  
gladly bere to yow vij. tho brought he to me  
this male where in the lettres be / whiche ben  
endytred by my connyng and I gaf counseyl of the  
makynge of them / I trowe ye sawe neuer lettres  
better ne craftelyer made ne endytred /

The kynge commanded anon bokart his secre-  
tarye to rede the lettres / ffor he vnderstode al  
maner langages / tybert the catte and he toke  
the male of bellyns necke / and bellyn hath so  
ferre sayd and confessyd / that he therfore was  
dampned.

**H**e clerke bokwart vndyde the male / and  
drew out kywarts heed and said alas what  
lettres ben these / certaynly my lord this  
is kywarts heed /

alas sayde the kynge that euer I beleuid so the  
foxe / There myghte men see grete heynesse of  
the kynge and of the quene / the kynge was so  
angry that he helde longe down his heed And atte  
laste after many thoughtes / he made a grete crye /  
that alle the bestys were aferde of the noyse /

Tho spack sir firaheel / the lupaerd whiche was  
sybbe somewhat to the kynge / and saide / sire kyng  
how make ye suche a noyse ye make sorow ynough  
though the quene were deed / late this sorowe goo/  
and make good chere / it is grete shame / be ye  
not a lorde and kynge of this londe / Is it not alle  
vnder yow / that here is /

the kynge sayde sir firaheel how sholde I suffre  
this / one false shrewe and deceyaur hath be-  
trayed me and brought me so ferre / that I haue  
forwrought and angred my frendes / that I the  
stoute bruyn the bere / and ysegrym the wulf /  
whiche sore me repenteth / and this goth ayenst  
my worship that I haue done amys ayenst my  
beste barons and that I trusted and beleuid so  
moche the fals horeson the foxe / and my wyf is  
cause therof / she prayde me so moche that I herde  
her prayer and that me repenteth / though it be  
to late /

what thawh sir kyng said the lupaerd / yf ther

be ony thing mysdon / it shal be amended we  
shal gyue to bruy n the bere to ysegrym the wulf /  
and to erswyn hys wyf for the pece of his skynne  
and for their shoes for to haue good pees bellyn  
the ramme / for he hath confessyd hymself that he  
gaf counseyl and consentyd to kywardes deth / it  
is reson that he aby it / And we alle shal goo  
fecche reynard and we shal areste hym and hange  
hym by the necke withoute lawe or Iugement / and  
ther with alle shul be contente /

**H**ow bellyn the ramme and alle  
his lignage were gyuen in the handes  
of ysegrym and bruy n and how he  
was slayn / capitulo .xxiij<sup>o</sup>.



He kynge saide I wil do it gladly /  
firapel the lupaerd wente tho to the  
pryson / and vnbonde them firste / and  
thenne he sayde ye sires I brynge to  
you a faste pardon and my lordes loue and frend-  
ship it repenteth hym and is sory that he euer hath  
don spoken or trespaced ayenst you / and therefore  
ye shal haue a good appoyntement / And also  
amendes he shal / gyue to you bellyn the ramme  
and alle his lignage fro now forthon to domesdaye /  
in suche wyse that where someuer ye fynde them in  
felde or in wode that ye may frely byte and ete  
them wythoute ony forfayte / And also the kynge

graunteth to yow / that ye maye hunte and do the  
werst ye can to reynard and alle his lynage wyth-  
oute mysdoynge This fayr grete pryuelage wylle the  
kyng graunte to you euer to holde of hym / And  
the kyng wille that ye swere to hym neuer to  
mysdoo / but doo hym homage and feawte I coun-  
seil yow to doo this / ffor ye may doo it honorably /

Thus was the pees made by fyrapel the lupaerd  
frendly and wel / And that coste bellyn the ramme  
his tabart and also his lyf / and the wulfis lignage  
holde this preuilegis of the kyng / and in to this  
daye they deuoure and ete bellyn's lignage where  
that they may fynde them this debate was begonne  
in an euyl tyme / ffor the pees coude neuer syth  
be made betwene them /

The kyng dyde forth wyth his courte and  
feste lengthe xij. dayes lenger for loue of the  
bere and the wulf / So glad was he of the makynge  
of this pees /

END OF VOL. I.





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This Edition is limited to seventy-five Large Paper copies, and two hundred and seventy-five Small Paper copies, issued only to Subscribers.

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of reynart the fore

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# THE HISTORY OF REYNARD THE FOX.

[THE SECOND PART.]

How the kynge helde his feeste /  
and how lapreel the cony complayned  
vnto the kynge vpon reynart the  
fore capitulo                   xxiij<sup>o</sup>.

**T**O this grete feste cam al maner of  
beestis / ffor the kynge dyde do crye  
this feste ouer alle in that londe / Ther  
was the moste Ioye and myrthe that  
euer was seen emonge beestis / Ther was daunsed  
manerly the houedaunce with shalmouse trompettis  
and alle maner of menestralsye / the kynge dyde  
do ordeyne so moche mete / that euerych fonde  
ynough / And ther was no beest in al his lande so  
grete ne so lytyl but he was there / and ther were  
many fowles and byrdes also / and alle they that  
desired the kynges frendship were there / sauynge  
reynard the foxe / the rede false pilgrym whiche  
laye in a wayte to doo harme / and thoughte it  
was not good for hym to be there / Mete and  
drynke flowde there / Ther weere playes and  
esbatemens / The feest was ful of melodye / One  
myghte haue luste to see suche a feeste /

and right as the feeste had dured viij dayes / a  
boute mydday cam in the cony lapreel to fore the  
kyng where he satte on the table with the quene /  
and sayde al heuylly that all they herde hym that  
were there / My lorde haue pyte on my complaynt  
whiche is of grete force and murdre that reynard  
the foxe wold haue don to me / yester morow as I  
cam rennyng by his borugh at maleperdhuis he  
stode byfore his dore without lyke a pylgryme / I  
supposed to haue passed by hym peasibly toward  
this feste and whan he sawe me come / he came  
ayenst me sayeng his bedes I salewed hym / but  
he spack not one worde / but he raught out his  
right foot and dubbed me in the necke bytwene  
myn Eeris / that I had wende I sholde haue loste  
my heed / but god be thanked I was so lyght that  
I sprange fro hym / wyth moche payne cam I of  
his clawes / he grymmed as he had ben angry by  
cause he helde me no faster / tho I escaped from  
hym I loste myn one ere / and I had foure grete  
holes in my heed of his sharpe nayles that the  
blood sprange out / and that I was nyhe al a  
swoun / but for the grete fere of my lyf I sprange  
and ran so faste fro hym that he coude not ouertake  
me / See my lord thise grete woundes that he hath  
made to me with his sharpe longe nayles / I pray  
yow to haue pite of me and that ye wil punysshe  
this false traytour and morderar / or ellis shal ther  
noman goo and comen ouer the heth in saefte /  
whyles he haunteth his false and shrewde rewle /

How corbant the roke complayned  
on the fore for the deth of his wyf  
capitulo .xxiiiij<sup>o</sup>.

**R**Yght as the cony had made an ende of  
his complaynt / cam in corbant the roek  
flo wen in the place to fore the kyng  
and sayde / dere lorde here me / I  
brynge you hier a pietous complaynt / I wente to  
day by the morow wyth sharpebek my wyf for to  
playe vpon the heth And there laye reynart the  
foxe down on the grounde lyke a dede keytyf /  
hys eyen stared and his tonge henge longe out of  
his mouth / lyke an hounde had been deed / we  
tasted and felte his bely / but we fonde theron no  
lyf / tho wente my wyf and herkened and leyde  
her ere to fore his mouth for to wite yf he drewe  
his breeth / whiche mysfyller her euyl / ffor the  
false felle foxe awayted wel his tyme and whan he  
sawe her so nygh hym / he caught her by the heed  
and boote if of / tho was I in grete sorowe and  
cryde lowde / Alas alas what is there happed /  
thenne stode he hatelsy vp / and raught so couet-  
ously after me that for feere of deth / I trembled  
and flew vpon a tree therby and sawe fro ferre  
how the false keytyf ete and slonked her in so  
hungerly that he leste neyther flessch ne bone /  
nomore but a fewe fethers / the smal fethers he  
slange them in wyth the flessch / he was so hungry /  
he wolde wel haue eten tweyne / Tho wente he

his strete / tho flewe I doun wyth grete sorow and  
gadred vp the fetheris for to shewe them to you  
here / I wolde not be agayn in suche peryl and  
fere as I was there for a thousand marke / of the  
synest gold that euer cam out of arabye / My lord  
the kynge see hier this pyteous werke / Thise ben  
the fethers of sharpbecke my wyf / my lord yf ye  
wil haue worship ye muste do herfore Iustyce and  
auenge you in suche wise as men may fere and  
holde of yow / ffor yf ye suffre thus youre sauf-  
conduyt to be broken / ye your self shal not goo  
peasibly in the hie way / for tho lordes that do  
not Iustyce and suffre that the lawe be not  
executed vpon the theeuys / morderars and them  
that mysdoo / they be parteners to fore god of alle  
theyr mysdedes and trespasses / and eueryche  
thenne / wylle be a lord hym self / dere lorde see  
wel to for to kepe your self

**How the kynge was sore angry  
of thise complayntes capitulo .xxv<sup>o</sup>.**

**N**Oble the kynge was sore meuyd and  
angry whan he had herde thise com-  
playntes of the cony and of the roke /  
he was so ferdful to loke on that his  
eyen glymmerd as fyre / he brayed as lowde as a  
bulle in suche wise that alle the court quoke for  
feere / at the laste he sayde cryeng / by my crowne

and by the trouthe that I owe to my wyf, I shal  
 so awreke and auenge this trespaces / that it shal  
 be longe spoken of after / that my saufcondyt  
 and my commandement is thus broken I was ouer  
 nyce that I beleuid so lyghtly the false shrewe /  
 his false flaterieng speche deceyued me / He tolde  
 me he wolde go to rome / and for thens ouer see  
 to the holy londe / I gaf hym male and palster  
 and made of hym a pylgrym and mente al trouth /  
 O what false touches can he / how can he stuffe  
 the sleue wyth flockes / but this caused my wyf /  
 it was al by her counseyl / I am not the fyrst that  
 haue been deceyued by wymmens counseyl by  
 whiche many a grete hurte hath byfallen / I pray  
 and comande alle them that holde of me and  
 desire my frendship / be they here or where  
 someuer they be / that they wyth theyr counseyl  
 and dedes helpe me tauenge this ouer geete\*  
 trespaas / that we and owris may abyde in honour  
 and worship / and this false thief in shame that  
 he nomore trespace ayenst our saufgarde / I wil  
 mysell in my persone helpe therto all that I maye /



Segrym the wulf and bruyne the bere herde  
 wel the kynges wordes / and hoped wel to  
 be auengid on reynard the foxe but they  
 durste not speke one word The kynge was so sore  
 meuyd that none durst wel speke /

Atte laste the quene spak / Sire pour dieu ne

---

\* Great.



croyes mye toutes choses que on vous dye / et ne  
lures pas legierment / A man of worship shold not  
lyghtly belieue ne swere gretly vnto the tyme he  
knewe the mater clerly. ana also he ought by right  
here that other partye speke. There ben many  
that complayne on other and ben in the defaute  
them self. *Audi alteram partem.* here that  
other partye / I haue truly holden the foxe for  
good / and vpon that / that he mente no falsehede /  
I helped hym that I mygbte but how someer it  
cometh or gooth / is he euyl or good / me thynk-  
eth for your worship that ye shold not procede  
ayenst hym ouer hastely that were not good ne  
honeste / ffor he may not escape fro you. Ye  
maye prysone hym or flee hym / he muste obeye  
your Iugement /

thenne saide fyrapel the lupaerd / My lord me  
thynketh / my lady here hath saide to you trouthe  
and gyuen yow good counseyl do ye wel and  
folowe her and take aduyse of your wyse counseyl /  
And yf he be founden gylty in the trespasses that  
now to yow be shewd / late hym be sore punyshid  
acordyng to hys trespasses / And yf he come not  
hyther / er this feste be ended and excuse hym /  
as he ought of right to doo / thenne doo as the  
counseyl shal aduyse yow / But and yf he were  
twyes as moche false and ylle as he is / I wolde  
not counseylle that he sholde be done to more  
then right /

Isegrym the wulf said sir fyrapal. all we agree

to the same as ferre as it pleseth my lord the kyng / it can not be better. But though reynart were now here. and he cleryd him of double so many playntes yet shold I brynge forth ayenste hym that he had forfayted his lyf. But I wyl now be styll and saye not. by cause he is not presente and yet aboue alle this he hath tolde the kyng of certayn tresour lyeng in krekennyng in hulsterlo. Ther was neuer lyed a greter lesyng. ther wyth he hath vs all begyled. and hath sore hyndred me and the bere. I dar leye my lyf theron that he sayd not therof a trewe worde. Now robbeth he and steleth vpon the heth / alle that gooth forth by his hows / Neuertheles sir firapel that pleseth the kyng and yow / that muste wel be don / But and yf he wolde haue comen hyther / he myght haue ben here for he had knowleche by the kynges messenger /

The kyng sayde we wyl none otherwyse sende for hym / But I commande alle them that owe me seruyse and wylle my honour and worshippe that they make them redy to the warre at the ende of vij dayes / all them that ben archers and haue bowes / gonnes / bombardes / horsemen / and footemen that alle thise be redy to besiege maleperduys / I shal destroye reynart the foxe / yf I be a kyng / ye lordes and sirces what saye ye hereto wille ye doo this wyth a good wyl /

And they sayd and cryed alle / ye we lorde / whan that ye wylle / we shal alle goo with yow.

**How grymbert the dasse warned  
the fore / that the kynge was wroth  
and wold slee hym capitulo .xxvj<sup>o</sup>.**



**A**lle these wordes herde grymbert the  
dasse whiche was his brother sone / he  
was sory and angry yf it myght haue  
proufftyed he ranne thenne the hie way  
to maleperduys ward / he spared nether busshe ne  
hawe / but he hasted so sore that he swette / he  
sorowed in hym self for reynart his rede eme / and  
as he wente hesaide to hymself Alas in what daunger  
be ye comen in / where shal ye become shal I see  
you brought fro lyf to deth / or elles exyled out of  
the lande / truly I may be wel sorouful / for ye  
be heed or alle our lygnage / ye be wyse of coun-  
seyl / ye be redy to helpe your frendes whan they  
haue nede / ye can so wel shewe your resons /  
that where ye speke / ye wyne all /

with suche maner wayllyng / and pytous wordes  
cam grymbert to maleperduys /

And fonde reynart his eme there standyng /  
whiche had goten two pygeons / as they cam first  
out of her nest to assaye yf they coude flee and  
because the fethers on her wyngis were to  
shorte / they fylle down to the ground / And as  
reynart was gon out to seche his mete / he espyed  
them and caught hem and was comen home with  
hem /

And whan he saw grymbert comyng / he  
taryed and said / welcome my best beloued neuw  
that I knowe in al my kynrede / ye haue ronne  
faste / ye ben al be swette / haue ye ony newe  
tydynges /

alas said he / lyef eme it standeth euyl wyth  
yow / ye have loste both lyf and good / the kynge  
hath sworn that he shal gyue you a shameful deth /  
he hath commanded alle his folke withyn vj dayes  
for to be here / Archers / fotemen / horsemen /  
And peple in waynes And he hath gunnes / bom-  
bardes tentes and pauyllyons / And also he hath do  
laaden torches / See to fore yow / For he haue  
nede / Ysegrym and bruyn ben better now wyth  
the kynge than I am wyth yow / Alle that they  
wille / Is doon / Isegrym hath don hym to vnder-  
stande that ye be a theef and a morderar he hath  
grete enuye to vow. Lapreel the cony and Cor-  
bant the rock haue made a grete complaynt also.  
I sorow moche for your lyf. That for drede I am  
alle seke.

Puf said the foxe / der neuw is ther nothyng  
ellis / be ye so sore aferd herof Make good chere  
hardely / though the kynge hym self and alle that  
ben in the court had sworn my deth / yet shal I  
be exalted aboue them alle / They may alle faste  
Iangle clatre and yeue counseyl / but the courte  
may not prospere wythoute me and my wyles and  
subtylte

**How reynart the foxe cam another  
tyme to the courte capitulo .xxviij<sup>o</sup>.**

**E**re neuwe late alle thise thynges passe  
and come here in / and see what I shal  
gyue you / a good payre of fatte  
pygeons / I loue no mete better / They  
ben good to dygeste / they may almoste be  
swolowen in al hool / the bones ben half blode /  
I ete them wyth that other. I fele my self other  
whyle encombred in my stomak therfore ete I  
gladly lyght mete. My wyf ermelyn shal receyue  
vs frendly / but telle her nothyng of this thyng /  
ffor she sholde take it ouer heuily / she is tendre  
of herte, she myghte for fere falle in somme sekenes /  
a lytyl thyng gooth sore to her herte. And to  
morrow erly I wil goo with yow to the courte /  
And yf I may come to speche and may be herde /  
I shal so ansuere / that I shal touche somme nygh  
ynowh / neuwe wyl not ye stande by me / as a  
frende oughte to doo to another /

yes truly dere eme said grymbert and alle my  
good is at your commandement /

god thanke you neuwe saide the foxe / That is  
wel said. yf I may lyue I shal quyte it yow /

Eme said grymbert ye may wel come tofore alle  
the lordes and excuse yow ther shall none areste  
yow ne holde as longe as ye be in your wordes /  
The quene and the lupaerd haue goten that /

then said the foxe / therfor I am glad / thenne  
I carre not for the beste of them an heer / I shal  
wel saue my self /

they spake nomore herof / but wente forth in  
to the burgh / And fonde ermelyn there sittynge by  
her yonglyngs whiche aroose vp anon and receyuid  
them frendly / Grymbert salewed his aunte and the  
chyl dren with friendly wordes / the ij pygeons  
were made rede for theyr soper / Whiche rey-  
nard had taken / eche of them toke his part as  
ferre as it wolde stratche / yf eche of hem had  
had one more / ther sholde but lytyl haue lefte  
ouer / the foxe saide / lief nouewe / how lyke / ye  
my chyl dren rosel and reynerdyn they shal do wor-  
ship to alle our lygnage / They begynne al redy to  
do wel / that one catcheth wel a chyken and that  
other a pullet / They conne wel also duke in the  
water after lapwynches and dokys / I wolde ofte  
sende them for prouande / but I wil fyrste teche  
them how they shal kepe them fro the grynnes /  
fro the hunters and fro the houndes / yf they were  
so ferre comen that they were wyse / I durste  
wel truste to them that they shold wel vytallylle vs  
in many good diuerses metes / That we now lacke /  
And they lyke and folowe me wel / ffor they playe  
alle grymmyng and where they hate they loke  
frendly and meryly· ffor ther by they brynge them  
vnder ther feet / And byte the throte asondre /  
This is the nature of the foxe / They be swyfte  
in their takynge whiche pleseth me wel.

**I** Me said grymbert ye may be glad that ye  
 haue suche wyse chyldren / And I am  
 glad of them also by cause they be of my  
 kynne /

Grymbert said the foxe ye haue swette and be  
 wery it were hye tyde that ye were at your  
 reste /

Eme yf it plesse you it thynketh me good. Tho  
 laye they doun on a lytier made of strawe / the  
 foxe hys wyf and his chyldren went alle to slepe /  
 But the foxe was all heuy / and laye sighed and  
 sorrowed how he myghte best excuse hym self /

On the morow erly he ruymed his castel and  
 wente with grymbart / but he toke leue first of  
 dame ermelyn his wyf and of his chyldren / and  
 sayde thynke not longe I muste goo to the court  
 wyth grymbert my cosyn / yf I tarye somewhat be  
 not aferde / and yf ye here ony ylle tydyngis / take  
 it alway for the beste. And see wel to your self  
 and kepe our castel wel I shal doo yonder the  
 beste I can after that I see how it gooth

Alas reyner said she how haue ye now thus taken  
 vpon yow for to go to the court agayn / the last  
 tyme that ye were there ye were in grete ieopardye  
 of your lyf. And ye sayde ye wold neuer come  
 there more.

dame said the foxe. thauenture of the world  
 is wonderly it goth otherwhyle by wenyng / Many  
 one weneth to haue a thing whiche he muste for-  
 goo. I muste nedes now go thyder / be content

it is al wythoute drede / I hope to come at alther  
lengest with in fyue dayes agayn /

Here wyth he departed and wente with grymbert  
to the court ward / And whan they were vpon the  
heeth thenne sayde reynar / Neuew syth I was  
last shryuen I haue don many shrewde tornes / I  
wolde ye wold here me now of alle that I haue  
trespaced in / I made the bere to haue a grete  
wounde for the male whiche was cute out of his  
skynne / And also I made the wulf aud his wyf to  
lese her shoon / I peased the kynge with grete  
lesyngis and bare hym on honde that the wulf and  
the bere wold haue betrayed hym and wolde haue  
slayn him / so I made the kynge right wroth with  
them where they deseruyd it not / also I tolde to  
the kynge that there was grete tresour in hulsterlo  
of whiche he was neuer the better ne richer / for  
I lyed al that I sayde / I ledde bellyn the ramme  
and kywart the hare with me / and slewe kywart  
and sente to the kynge by bellyn kywarts heed in  
skorn / And I dowed the cony bytwene his eeris  
that almost I benamme his lyf from hym ffor he  
escaped ayenst my wyl / he was to me ouerswyft /  
The roeke may wel complayne / for I swolowed  
in dame sharpbeck his wyf / and also I haue for-  
gotten on thyng the laste tyme that I was shreuen  
to you / Which I haue syth bethought me / And  
it was of grete deceyte that I dyde whiche I now  
wyll telle yow /

I cam wyth the wulf walkynge bytwene



houthulst and eluerdyng / There sawe we goo a  
rede mare / And she had a black colte or a fool of  
iiij monethis olde / whiche was good and fatte  
Isegrym was almost storuen for hunger / And  
prayd me goo to the mare / and wyte of her yf she  
wold selle her fool /

I ran faste to the mare / And axed that of her /  
she sayd she wold selle it for money /

I demaunded of her how she wold selle it /

she sayde it is wretton in my hyndre foot / Yf  
ye conne rede and be a clerk ye may come see and  
rede it.

Tho wyste I wel where she wold be. and I  
saide nay for sothe I can not rede / And also I  
desyre not to bye your chylde Isegrym hath sente  
me hether. and wold fayn knowe the prys therof /  
the mare saide late him comme thenne hym  
self / And I shall late hym haue knowleche /

I sayde / I shal / and hastely weete to ysegrym  
and saide / eme will ye ete your bely ful of this  
colte / so goo faste to the mare for she taryeth  
after yow / She hath do wryte the pris of her  
colte vnder her fote she wolde that I shold haue  
redde it / but I can not one lettre / which me sore  
repenteth / ffor I wente neuer to scole / eme wylle  
ye bye that colte / conne ye rede so maye ye bye  
it /

oy newew that can I wel what shold me lette / I  
can wel frenshe latyn englissh and duche. I haue  
goon to scole at oxenford I haue also wyth olde

and auncyent doctours ben in the audyence and  
herde ples / and also haue gyuen sentence / I am  
lycensyd in bothe lawes / what maner wrytyng  
that ony man can deuyse / I can rede it as  
perfyghtly as my name. I wyl goo to her and shal  
anon vnderstonde the prys / and he bade me to  
tarye for hym /

and he ranne to the mare / and axed her how  
she wold selle her fool or kepe it /

she sayde the somme of the money standeth  
wreton on my fote

he said lete me rede it

she said doo and lyfte vp her foot whiche was  
newe shood wyth yron and vj stronge nayles / and  
she smote hym wythout myssyng on his heed that  
he fyl down as he had ben deed / a man shold wel  
haue ryden a myle er he aroos / The mare  
trotted a way wyth her colte / And she left  
Isegrym lyeng shrewdly hurt and wounded He  
laye and bledde / And howled as an hound / I  
wente tho to hym and sayde / Sir ysegrym dere  
eme how is it now wyth yow. haue ye eten  
ynowh of the colte. is your bely ful. why gyue  
ye me no part I dyde your errande. haue ye slepte  
your dyner I pray yow telle me what was wreton  
vnder the mares fote. what was it. prose or ryme.  
metre or verse. I wold fayn knowe it. I trowe it  
was cantum. for I herde you synge me thoughte  
fro ferre. for ye were so wyse that noman coude  
rede it better than ye

Alas reynart alas said the wulf I pray you to  
leue youre mockyng. I am so foule arayed and  
sore hurte / than an herte of stone myght haue  
pyte on me. The hore wyth her longe legge had  
an yron foot I wende the nayles therof had ben  
lettres / and she hytte me at the fyrst stroke vj.  
grete woundes in my heed that almost it is clouen.  
suche maner lettres shal I neuer more desire to  
rede /

Dere eme is that trouthe that ye telle me / I  
haue grete meruaylle / I heelde you for one of the  
wysest clerkes that now lyue / Now I here wel / it  
is true that I long syth haue redde and herde /  
that the best clerkes ben not the wysest men /

The laye peple otherwhyle wexe wyse / the  
cause that thise clerkes ben not the wysest / is that  
they studye so moche in the connyng and science /  
that they therin doole / Thus brought I Isegrym  
in this grete laste and harme. That he vnneth  
byhelde his lyf /

**I**f neuwe now haue I tolde yow alle my  
synnes that I remembre. What so euer  
falle at the courte. I wo'e neuer how it  
shal stonde with me there. I am not now so sore  
aferd' ffor I am clere from synne I wyl gladly  
come to mercy / and receyue penance by your  
counseyl'

grymbert sayde the trespasses ben grete / neuer-  
theles who that is deed must abyde deed. and

therefore I wyl forgyue it you alto gydre / With the  
fere that ye shal suffre therfore / er ye shal conne  
excuse yow of the deth / and hier vpon I wyl  
assoille you. but the moste hyndre that ye shal  
haue shal be. that ye sente kywarts heed to the  
court And that ye blynded the kynge wyth sutthe  
lyes / Eme that was right euyldoon /

The foxe sayde. what lyef neuew. Who that  
wyl go thurgh the world this to here. and that to  
see / and that other to telle. truly it may not clerly  
be done. how shold ony man handle hony. but yf  
he lycked his fynGRES. I am oftymes rored and  
prycked in my conscience as to loue god aboue all  
thynges and myn euen crysten as my self. as is to  
god wel acceptable. and accordyng to his lawe /  
But how wene ye that reson wythin forth fyghteth  
ayenst the outeward wylle than stonde I alle styлле  
in my self that me thynketh I haue loste alle my  
wittes / And wote not what me eyleth I am thenne  
in suche a thought / I haue now alle lefte my  
synnes / And hate alle thynges that is not good /  
and clymme in high contemplacion aboue his com-  
mandements but this specyal grace haue I whan I  
am alone / But in a short whyle after whan the  
world cometh in me thenne fynde I in my waye so  
many stones / and the foot spores that thyse loos  
prelates / and riche preestys goo in / that I am  
anone taken agayn / thenne cometh the world and  
wyl haue this / And the flesshe wyl lyue plesantly /  
whiche leye to fore me so many thynges that I

thenne lese alle my good thoughtis and purpoos /  
 I here there synge pype / lawhe / playe / and alle  
 myrthe / And I here that these prelates and riche  
 curates preche and saye al other wyse / than they  
 thynke and doo / There lerne I to lye / the  
 lesynges ben moste vsed in the lordes courtes /  
 certaynly lordes / ladyes / prestis and clerkes  
 maken moste lesyngis / Men dar not telle to the  
 lordes now the trouthe / Ther is defaute / I muste  
 flatre and lye also / or ellis I shold be shette  
 wythoute the dore / I haue ofte herde men saye  
 trouthe and rightfully / And haue theyr reson made  
 with a lesynge lyke to theyr purpose and brought  
 it in and wente thurgh by cause their mater shold  
 seme the fayrer / The lesyng oftymes cometh  
 vnauysed / And falleth in the mater vnwetyngly.  
 And so whan she is wel cladde / it goth forth  
 thurgh with that other /

**E**re newew thus muste men now lye here /  
 and there saye soth flatre / and menace /  
 praye and curse / And seke euery man  
 vpon his feblest and wekest / who otherwyse wylle  
 now haunte and vse the world / than deuysse ale-  
 syng in the fayrest wyse / and that bywymple with  
 kerchieuis aboute in suche wise that men take it  
 for a trouthe / he is not ronne away fro his maister /  
 Can he that subtylte in suche wise that he stamer  
 not in his wordes / and may thenne be herde /  
 newew / this man may doo wonder he may were

skarlet and gryse / he wynneth in the spyrituel  
lawe and temporal also and where sommeuer he  
hath to doo / Now ben ther many false shrewis  
that haue grete enuye that they haue so grete for-  
dele / And wene that they conne also wel lye / And  
take on them to lye and to telle it forth / he wolde  
fayn ete of the fatte morsellis. but he is not so  
bileued ne herd / And many ben ther that be so  
plombe and folisshe that whan they wene beste to  
prononce and shewe their matere and conclude.  
They falle besyde and out therof. And can not  
thenne helpe hem self / and leue theyr mater  
wythout tayl or heed and he is a compted for a  
fool / And many mocke them ther with / but who  
can gyue to his lesynge a conclusion / and pro-  
nonce it without tatelyng lyke as it were wretton to  
fore hym / and that he can so blynde the peple /  
That his lesynge shal better be bileuid than the  
trouthe / That is the man. What connyng is it to  
saye the trouthe that is good to doo. How lawhe  
thise false subtyl shrewis that gyue counseyl to  
make thise lesynges. and sette them forth / And  
maken vnright goo aboute right / and make billes /  
and sette in thynges that neuer were thought ne  
sayd / and techen men see thurgh their fynGRES And  
alle for to wyne money / and late their tonges to  
hyre for to mayntene and strengthe their lesyngis  
alas neuwe this is an euyl connyng / of whiche  
lyf. scathe and hurte may come ther of /



Saye not but that otherwhyle men muste  
Iape / bourde and lye in smale thyngis /  
for who so sayth alway trouthe. he may not  
now goo nowher thurgh the world. ther ben many  
that playe placebo. who so alleway sayth trouthe.  
shal fynde many lettyngis in his way. Men may  
wel lye whan it is nede / and after amende it by  
counseyl / ffor all trespaces / ther is mercy. Ther  
is no man so wyse / but he dooleth other  
whyle /

Grymbert sayde wel dere eme what thyng shal  
you lette. ye knowe al thyng at the narewest / ye  
shulde brynge me hastely in dotyng your resons  
passen my vnderstandyng / what nede haue ye to  
shryue you / ye shulde your self by right be the  
preest / And lete me and other sheep come to you  
for to be shruyen / ye knowe the state of the  
world in such wyse as noman may halte tofore  
you /

Wyth suche maner talkyng they cam walkyng  
in to the court / The foxe sorowed somewhat in his  
berte / Neuertheles he bare it out and stryked  
forth thurgh alle the folke til he cam in to the place  
where the kyng hym self was /

And grymbert was alway by the foxe and sayd  
eme be not a ferde. and make good chere / who  
that is hardy / thauenture helpeth hym / Oftymes  
one day is better than somtyme an hole yere /

the foxe saide / Neuew ye saye trouthe / god  
thanke you ye comfort me wel

And forth he wente and lokyd grymly here and there as who saith / what wylle ye here come I / he sawe there many of his kynne standyng which yonned hym but lytyl good / as the otter beuer and other to the nombre of .x. whome I shal. name afterward / And somme were there that loued hym.

The ffoxe cam in and fyl down on his knees to fore the kyng and began his wordes and sayde.

**How reynart the fore excused  
hym bifore the kyng capitulo  
.xxviii<sup>o</sup>.**



God fro whom nothyng may be hyd / and aboue alle thyng is myghty saue my lord the kyng and my lady the queene and gyue hym grace to knowe who hath right and who hath wronge / For ther lyue many in the world that seme otherwise outward than they be withinne / I wolde that god shewde openly euery mans mysdedes / and alle theyr trespasses stoden wreton in theyr forehedes / and it coste me more than I now saye / And that ye my lord the kyng knewe as moche as / I doo / how I dispose me bothe erly and late in your seruise / And therefore am I complayned on of the euyl shrewys and wyth lesynges am put out of your grace and consaye / and wold charge me with grete offencis



wythoute deseruyng ayenst al right / Wherfore I  
 crye out harowe on them that so falsely haue belyed  
 me / and brought me in suche trouthe / how be it  
 I hope and knowe you bothe my lorde and my lady  
 for so wyse and discrete / that ye be not ledde nor  
 bileuee suche lesyngis ne false talis out of the right  
 waye for ye haue not be woned so to doo / Ther-  
 fore dere lorde I biseche you to considre by your  
 wysedom alle thyng by right and lawe / is it in  
 deede or in speche / do euery man right / I desire  
 no better he that is gylty and founde sawty late hym  
 be punysshed / men shal wel knowe er I departe  
 out of this courte / who that I am / I can not flatre  
 I wil allewey shewe openly my heed.

### How the kynge answered vpon reynarts excuse.



Alle they that were in the palays weren  
 alle styлле and wondred that the foxe  
 spack so stoutly /  
 the kynge sayde / ha reynart how wel  
 can ye your falacye and salutacion doon but your  
 fayr wordes may not helpe you I thynke wel that  
 ye shal this daye for your werkis be hanged by  
 your necke / I wil not moche chyde wyth you But  
 I shal shorte your payne / that ye loue vs wel /  
 that haue ye wel shewde on the cony and on cor-  
 bant the roeck / your falsnes and your false

Inuencions shal without longe taryeng make you to  
deye / A pot may goo so longe to water / that at  
the laste it cometh to broken hoom / I thynke  
your potte that so ofte hath deceyued vs / shal  
now hastily be broken /

reynart was in grete fere of thise wordes· he  
wold wel. he had ben at coleyn / when he cam  
thedyr / Thenne thought he I muste her thurgh /  
how that I doo

my lorde the kynge seyde he / it were wel reson  
that ye herde my wordes alle out / though I  
were dampned to the deth / yet ought ye to here  
my wordes out. I haue yet here to fore tyme  
gyuen to you many a good counseyl and prouffyt-  
able / And in nede alwey haue byden by yow where  
other beestis haue wyked and goon theyr way / yf  
now the euyl beestis with false maters haue to fore  
you wyth wronge belyed me / and I myght not  
come to myn excuse / ought I not thenne to  
playne / I haue to fore this seen that I shold be  
herde by fore another / yet myght thise thyngis  
wel chaunge and come in theyr olde state / Olde  
good dedes ought to be remembrid / I see here  
many of my lygnage and frendes standyng that  
seme they sette no lytyl by me / Whiche neuer-  
theles sholde sore dere in theyr hertes. that ye my  
lord the kynge sholde destroye me wrongfully yf ye  
so dyde he sholde destroye the trewest seruant  
that ye haue in alle your landes / what wene ye  
syr kynge / hadde I knowen my self gylty in ony

feat or broke. that I wold haue comen hether to the lawe emonge alle myne enemyes / Nay sire nay / not for alle the world of rede gold / ffor I was fre and at large / What nede had I to do that / but god be thanked I knowe my self clere of alle mysdedes that I dar wel come openly in the lyghte and to answeere to alle the complayntes that any man can saye on me / but whan grymbert brought me first thise tydyngis / tho was I not wel plesed but half fro myself that I lepe here and there as an vnwyse man / And had I not ben in the censures of the chyrche / I had wythoute taryeng haue comen / but I wente dolyng on the heeth / and wist not what to doo for sorowe /



And thenne it happed that mertyne myneme the ape mette wyth me. Whiche is wyser in clergie than somme preest. he hath ben aduocate for the bysshop of cameryk ix yere duryng. he sawe me in this grete sorow and heuynes. and saide to me / dere cosyn me thynketh ye ar not wel wyth your self / what eyleth yow. who hath dyspleseyth you. Thyng that thoucheth charge ought to be gyuen in knowleche to frendis. A triew frende is a grete helpe. he fyndeth ofte better counseyl than he that the charge resteth on. ffor who someuer is charged wyth maters is so heuy and acombred with them that ofte he can not begynne to fynde the remedye ffor suche be so woo lyke as they had loste theyr Inwytte.

**I** Saide dere eme ye saye trouthe. For in lyke wyse is fallen to me. I am brought in to a grete heuynes vnderuid and not gylty / by one to whom I haue alway ben an herty and grete frende / that is the cony whiche cam to me yesterday in the morenyng where as I satte to fore my hows and sayd matyns /

He tolde me he wolde goo to the court and salewed me frendly and I hym agayne /

Tho sayd he to me / good reynard I am an hongred and am wery / haue ye ony mete.

I saide ye ynowh come nere.

Tho gaf I hym a copel of maynchettis with swete butter / It was vpon a wednesday on which day I am not wonte to ete ony flessch / And also I fasted by cause of this feste of whitsontyd whiche approuched / For who that wylle taste of the ouerest wysehede / and lyue goostly in kepyng the commandements of our lord / he muste faste and make hym redy ayenst the hye festes / *Et vos estote parati* / dere eme I gaf hym fayr whyte breed with swete butter / wherwyth a man myght wel be easid that were moche hongry.

And whan he had eten his bely fulle / tho cam russel my yongest sone / and wold haue taken away that was lefte / For yonge chyl dren wold always fayne eten / And with that he tasted for to haue taken somewhat / the cony smote russel to fore his mouthe that his teeth bledde / and fyl doun half a swoun / whan reynardyn myn eldest

sone sawe that. he sprange to the cony and caught hym by the heed. and shold haue slayn hym. had I not reskowed hym I helpe hym that he wente fro hym / and bete my chyde sore therfore.

lapreel the cony ran to my lord the kyng and saide I wold haue murdered hym See eme thus come I in the wordes / and I am leyde in the blame. And yet he complayneth and I playne not /

After this cam corbant the roek fleyng wyth a sorouful noyse / I asked what hym eyled.

and he said alas my wyf is deed / yonder lyeth a dede hare full of mathes and wormes / and there she ete so moche therof. that the wormes haue byten a two her throte /

I axed hym how cometh that by / he wold not speke a worde more but flewe his waye / And lete me stande.

Now saith he that I haue byten and slayn her / how shold I come so nygh her / for shее fleeth / and I goo a fote. beholde dere eme thus am I born an honde. I may saye wel that I am vnhappy / But parauenture it is for myn olde synnes / hit were good for me yf I coude paciently suffre it.

The ape saide to me / Neuew ye shal goo to the courte to fore the lordes and excuse yow /



Las eme that may not be. ffor the arche. deken hath put me in the popes curse / by cause I counseyllled ysegrym the wulf for to leue his religyon at elmare and forsake his

habyte / he complayned to me that he lyuyd so straitly as in longe fastyng and many thyngis redyng and syngyng that he coude not endure it. Yf he shold longe abyde there he shold deye. I had pyte of his complaynyng / And I helpe hym as a trewe frende that he cam oute. Whiche now me sore repenteth. for he laboureth al that he can ayenst me to the kynge for to do me behanged. thus doth he euyl forgood. See eme thus am I at the ende of al my wyttes and of counseyl. For I muste goo to rome for an absolucion. And thenne shal my wyf and chyl dren suffre moche harme and blame. For thise euyl bestis that hate me / shulle do to hem alle the hurte they maye and fordryue them wher they can / And I wold wel defende hem yf I were fre of the curse / for thenne wold I goo to the court and excuse me / where now I dar not / I shold do grete synne yf I cam emonge the good peple / I am aferde god sholde plaghe me.



Ay cosyn be not aferd. er I shold suffre you in this sorow I knowe the way to rome wel. I vnderstande me on this werke. I am called ther mertyne the bisshops clerke. and am wel byknowen there. I shal do syte the arche-deken and take a plee ayenst hym. and shal brynge with me for you an absolucion ayenst his wil / for I knowe there alle that is for to be doon or lefte there dwelleth symon myn eme whiche is grete and myghty ther. who that may gyue ought /

he helpeth hym anon / ther is prentout wayte  
scathe / and other / of my frendis and alyes Also I  
shal take somme money with me / yf I nede ony.  
the preyer is wyth yestes hardy. wyth money ane-  
way the right goth forth. A trewe frende shal for  
his frende auentre both lyf and good / and so shal  
I for you in your right

Cosyn make good chere I shal not reste after to  
morow til I come to rome / and I shal solycyte  
your maters / And goo ye to the court as sone as ye  
may / all your mysdedes / and tho synnes that haue  
brought you in the grete sentence and curse / I  
make you quyte of them and take them in my self /  
whan ye come to the court ye shal fynde there  
rukenawe my wyf / her two susters and my thre  
chyl dren and many mo of our lignage / dere cosyn  
speke to them hardely / my wyf his sondrely wyse /  
and wil gladly do somme what for her frendis / who  
that hath nede of helpe shal fynde on her grete  
frendship / one shal alway seke on his frendis /  
though he haue angred them / for blood must krep /  
where it can not goo / And yf so be that ye be so  
ouer chargyd that ye may haue no right / thenne  
sende to me by nyght and day to the courte of  
rome / and late me haue knowleche therof / and  
alle tho that ben in the lande is it kynge or quene /  
wyf or man I shall brynge then alle in the  
popes curse / and sende there an Interdicte  
that noman shal rede ne syngen ne crystene  
chyl dren / ne burye the deede ne receyue sacra-

mente / tyl that ye shal haue good ryght / Cosyn  
 this shal I wel gete / for the pope is so sore old  
 that he is but lytil sette by / And the cardynal of  
 pure gold hath alle the myght of the court / he is  
 yonge and grete of frendis he hath a concubyne /  
 whom he moche loueth / And what she desyreth  
 that geteth she anone / see cosyn / she is myn  
 nece / and I am grete and may doo moche with  
 her in suche wyse / what I desyre / I faylle not of  
 it / but am alway furtherd therin / wherfore cosyn  
 byd my lord the kyng that he doo you right / I  
 wote wel he wil not warne you / for the right is  
 heuy ynough to euery man /

**M**Y lord the kyng whan I herde this I  
 lawhed / and wyth grete gladnes cam  
 hether and haue told you alle trouthe /  
 yf ther be ony in this court that can leye on me  
 ony other mater wyth good witesse and preue it  
 as ought to be to a noble man / late me thenne  
 make amendes acordyng to the lawe / and yf he  
 wil not leue of herbi / thenne sette me day and  
 feld and I shal make good on hym also ferre as  
 he be of as good birthe as i am and to me lyke /  
 and who that can wyth fyghtyng getethe worship  
 of the felde / late hym haue it / this right hath  
 standen yet hetherto. And I wil not it sholde be  
 broken by me. the lawe and the right doth noman  
 wrong /



**A**lle the beestis both poure and riche were  
 alle style whan the foxe spak so stoutly  
 the cony laprel and the roek were so sore  
 aferde that they durste not speke but pyked and  
 stryked them out of the court bothe two. and  
 whan they were a room fer in the playne they  
 saide, god graunte that this felle murderare may  
 fare euyl. he can bywrappe and couere his fals-  
 hede, that his wordes seme as trewe as the gospel  
 herof knoweth noman than we. how shold we  
 brynge wytnesse. it is better that we wyke and  
 departe than we sholde holde a felde and fyghte  
 with hym he is so shrewde. ye thaugh ther of  
 vs were fyue we coude not defende vs. but that he  
 shold sle vs alle.

Isegrym the wulf and bruyn the bere / were woo  
 in hem self whan they sawe thise tweyne rume the  
 court /

**H**e kinge sayde / yf ony man wil complayne  
 late hym come forth / and we shal here  
 hym ysterday camen here so many  
 where ben they now Reynart is here /

**H**e foxe saide. my lord ther ben many that  
 complayne / that and yf they sawe their  
 aduersarye they wold be style and make  
 no playnte / witnes now of laprel the cony and  
 Corbant the roke / whiche haue complayned on me  
 to yow in my absence / but now that I am comen

in your presence they flee away / And dar not  
 abyde by theyr wordes / yf men shold byleue false  
 shrewes / it shold do moche harme and hurte to  
 the good men / as for me it skylleth not Neuer-  
 theless my lord yf they had by your commande-  
 ment axed of me forgyfnes / how be it they haue  
 gretly trespaced / yet I had for your sake pardoned  
 and forgyue them / for I wil not be out of  
 charyte / ne hate ne complayne on myne enemyes /  
 but I sette alle thyng in goddes hand he shall  
 werke and auenge it as it plesyth hym.

**H**e kynge saide reynart / me thynketh ye  
 be greuyd as ye saye / ar ye withinforth as  
 ye seme outward / Nay it is not so cleer  
 ne so open nowher nyghe / as ye here haue  
 shewed / I muste saye what my gryef is / whiche  
 towcheth your worship and lyf / that is to wete /  
 that ye haue don a foule and shameful trespaas /  
 whan I had pardoned you alle your offencis and  
 trespacis / and ye promysed to goo ouer the see  
 on pylgremage / And gaf to you male and staf /  
 And after this ye sente me by bellyn the ramme  
 the male agayn and theryn kywards heed / how  
 myght ye do amore reprouable trespaas / how  
 were ye so hardy to dore to me doosuche a shame /  
 is it not euyl don to sende to a lorde / his ser-  
 uaunts heed / ye can not saye nay here agaynst for  
 bellyn the ram whiche was our chapelayn tolde vs  
 al the mater how it happed / suche reward as he

had whan he brought vs the message / the same  
shall ye haue or right shall faylle /

tho was reynart so sore aferd that he wist not  
what to saye / he was at his wittes ende / and  
loked aboute hym pytously and sawe many of his  
kyn and alyes that herde alle this but nought they  
saide / he was al pale in his visage but noman  
proferd hym hand ne fote to helpe hym /

the kinge said thou subtyl felaw and fals shrewe  
why spekest thou not [art thou] now dombe.

The foxe stode in grete drede and syghed sore  
that alle herde hym / But the wulf and the bere  
were glad herof.

### How dame rukenawe answered for the foxe to the kyng. capitulo

xxix<sup>o</sup>.



Amc rukenawe the she ape reynarts  
aunte was not well pleyd / She was  
grete wyth the quene and wel belouyd /  
hit happed wel for the foxe that she was  
there. ffor she vnderstood alle wysedom / And she  
durste wel speke / where as it to doo was / where  
euer she cam euerich was glad of her /

She sayde my lord the kyng ye ought not to be  
angry whan ye sytte in Iugement / ffor that be-  
cometh not your noblesse. A man that sytteth in  
Iugement ought to put fro hym alle wrath and

angre / A lorde ought to haue dyscrescion that  
shold sytte in Iustyse / I knowe better the poyntes  
of the lawe / than somme that were furrýd gownes /  
ffor I haue lerned many of them / and was made  
connyng in the lawe / I had in the popes palays of  
woerden a good bedde of heye / where other  
beestes laye on the harde grounde and also whan I  
had there to doo / I was suffred to speke / and was  
herd to fore another / by cause I knewe so wel the  
lawe / Seneca wryteth that a lorde shal oueral doo  
right and lawe / he shal charge none to whom he  
hath gyuen his sauþgarde to aboue the right and  
lawe / the lawe ought not to halte for noman /  
And every man that stondeth here wolde wel  
bethynke hym what he hath doon and bydryuen  
in his dayes he shold the better haue pacience and  
pyte on Reynarte / late euery man knowe hym  
self / that is my counseyl / ther is none that  
stondeth so surely / but otherwhyle he falleth or  
slydeth / who that neuer mysdede ne synned / is  
holy and good and hath no nede to amende hym /  
whan a man doth amys / and thenne by counseyl  
amendeth it / that is humaynly / and so ought he  
to doo / but away to mysdo and trespase / and not  
to amende hym / that ys euyl and a deuely lyf /  
Merke thenne what is wreton in the gospel *Estote  
misericordes* / be ye mercyful yet standeth ther  
more / *Nolite iudicare* / et non iudica bimini /  
deme ye noman / and ye shal not be demed / Ther  
standeth also how the pharisees brought awoman

taken in aduoultrye and wold haue stoned her to deth / they axed our lord what he said therto / he said who of yow alle is withoute synne / late hym caste the fyrste stone / tho abode noman but lefte her there stondyng.

**M**E thynketh it is so hyere / ther be many that see a strawe in an others ye\* / that can not see a balke in his owne / there be many that deme other / and hym self is worst of alle / though one falle ofte / and at laste aryseth vp and cometh to mercy / he is not therof dampned God receyueth alle them that desyre hys mercy late noman condampne another / though they wyste that he had don amys / yet late them see theyr owne defawtes / and thenne may they them self correcte fyrst / and thenne reynert my cosyn shold not fare the werse for his fadre and his graunfadre / haue alway ben in more loue and reputaconn in this court than Isegrym the wulf or bruyn the bere with al theyr frendis and lignage / hit hath ben here to fore an vnlyke comparison / the wysedom of Reynart my cosyn / and the honour and worship of hym that he hath doon and the counseyl of them / ffor they knowe not how the world gooth / me thynketh this court is al torned vp so doon / Thise false shrewes flaterers and deceyuours arise and wexe grete by the lordes and ben enhaunsed vp / And the good triewe and

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\* Eye.

wyse ben put down / For they haue ben woned to  
counseylle truly and for thonour of the kyng I  
can not see how this may stonde longe /

Thenne said the kyng / dame yf he had don  
to yow suche trespaas as he hath don to other it  
shold repent yow. Is it wonder that I hate hym /  
he breketh alway my saufigarde / haue ye not herde  
the complayntes that there haue ben shewde of  
hym of murdre / of theefte / And of treson / haue  
ye suche trust in hym / Thynke ye that he is thus  
good and cleer / thenne sette hym vp on the awter  
and worshipe and praye to hym as to asaynte /  
But ther is none in alle the world that can say any  
good of hym / ye maye saye moche for hym / but in  
thende ye shal fynde hym al nought / he hath  
nether kyn ne wyn ne frende that wylle enterprise  
to helpe hym he hath so deseruyd / I haue grete  
meruaylle of yow / I herde neuer of none that hath  
felawsshippid with hym that euer thanked hym or  
saide ony good of hym / sauf you now / but alway  
he hath stryked hem with his tayl /

the she ape ansuerd and said / my lord I loue  
hym and haue hym in grete chierte. And also I  
knowe a good dede that he ones in your presence  
dyde / wherof ye coude hym grete thanke / though  
now it be thus torned / yet shal the heuyest / weye  
moste / a man shal loue his frende by mesure / and  
not his enemye hate ouermuche / stedfastnes and  
constaunce is fyttyng and behoueth to the lordes.  
how someuer the world torneth. Me ought not

preyse to moche the daye. tyl euen be come.  
good counseyl is good for hym that wil doo ther  
after.

**A parable of a man that delyuered  
a serpent fro peryl of deth. capitulo  
xxx°.**



Ow two yere passid cam a man and a  
serpent here in to this court for to haue  
Iugement. which was to yow and  
yours right doubtful. The serpent  
stode in an hedche where as he supposed to haue  
gon thorough / but he was caught in a snare by the  
necke. that he myght not escape without helpe  
but shuld haue lost his lyf there. the man cam  
forth by. and the serpente called to hym and cryde.  
and prayd the man that he wolde helpe hym out  
of the snare. or ellis he muste there dye :

The man had pyte of hym and saide / yf thou  
promyse to me that thou wilt not enuename me ne  
do me none harme ne hurte I shal helpe the out of  
this peryl /

The serpente was redy and swore a grete othe  
that he now ne neuer sholde doo hym harme ne  
hurte.

Thenne he vnlosed hym and delyuerd hym out  
of the snare / And wente forth to gydre a good  
whyle / that the serpente had grete hongre for he

had not eten a grete while to fore. and sterte to the man and wold haue slayn hym. the man sterte awaye and was a ferde and said / wylte thou now sle me / hast thou forgotten the oth that ihou madest to me that thou sholdest not mysdoo ne hurte me

The serpente answerd I maye do it good / to fore al the world that I doo / the nede of hongre may cause a man to breke his oth /

The man saide yf it may be not better / gyue me so longe respyte tyl we mete and fynde that may Iuge the mater by right /

The serpente graunted therto / thus they wente to gydre so longe that they fonde tyselyn the rauen / And slyndpere his sonne / there rehersed they theyr resons.

Tiselyn the rauen Iuged anon that he shold ete the man / he wolde fayn haue eten his parte and his sone also /

The serpente said to the man / how is it now / what thynke ye haue I not wonne /

The man saide / how sholde a robber Iuge this he shold haue auayle therby / and also he is allone / ther muste be two or thre atte leste to gydre and that they vnderstande the right and lawe and that don / late the sentence gon / I am neuertheles yl on ynough /

They a greed and wente forth bothe to gydre so longe that they fonde the beer and the wulf to whom they tolde theyr mater /

And they anon Iuged that the serpent shold sle



the man / For the nede of hongre breketh oth  
alway / the man thenne was in grete doubte and  
fere / and the serpent cam and cast his venym at  
hym / but the man lepe a way from hym with grete  
payne.

And said ye doo grete wronge that ye thus lye  
in a wayte to slee me / ye haue no right therto /

The serpent sayde / Is it not ynough yet / hit hath  
been twyes lured /

ye sayd the man that is of them that ben  
wonte to murdre and robbe. Alle that euer  
they swere and promyse they holde not / but I  
appele this mater in to the court to fore our lord  
the kyng / And that thou mayst not forsake And  
what Iugement that shal be gyuen there / I shal  
obeye and suffre / and neuer doo the contrarye.

**T**He bere and the wulf sayden that it shold  
be so / And that the serpent desired no  
better / They supposed yf it shold come to  
fore yow / It shold goo there as they wolde. I  
trowe ye be wel remembrid herof. Tho cam  
they alle to the court to fore yow / And the wulues  
two chyl dren cam with theyr fader. Whiche were  
callyd empty bely and neuer full / by cause they  
wold ete of the man. ffor they howlyd for grete  
hongre wherfore ye commaunded them to auoyde  
your court /

The man stode in grete drede / And called vpon  
your good grace and tolde how the serpente wolde

haue taken his lyf from hym to whom he had sauyn  
his lyf and that aboue his oth and promyse he wold  
haue deuoured hym /

The serpente answerd I haue not trespaced / And  
that I reporte me hoolly vn\* the kyng / For I  
dyde it to saue my lyf / ffor nede of lyf / one may  
breke his oth and promyse /

My lord that tyme were ye and alle your  
counseyl here wyth acombryd For your noble grace  
sawe the grete sorow of the man / And ye wold not  
that a man shold for his gentilnes and kyndenes  
be Inged to deth / And on that other sith hongre  
and nede to saue the lyf seketh narrowly to be  
holpen / hier was none in al the court that coude  
ne knewe the right hierof / There were somme  
that wolde fayn the man had be holpen / I see them  
hier stondyng / I wote wel they sayde that they  
coude not ende this mater.

Thenne commanded ye that reynard my newew  
shold come and saye his aduys in this mater / that  
tyme was he aboue alle other byleuyd and herd in  
the court / And ye bad hymgyue sentence acordyng  
to the best right / and we alle shal folowe hym / For  
he knewe the grounde of the lawe /

reynard said my lord / it is not possyble to yeue  
a trewe sentence after theyr wordes / for in here  
sayeng ben ofte lesynges / But and yf I myght see  
the serpent in the same paryl and nede that he  
was in whan the man loosed hym and vnbonde/

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\* Unto (?).

Thenne wyste I wel what I shold saye / And who  
that wolde doo otherwise he shold mysdoo agayn\*  
right /

Thenne sayd ye my lord reynard that is wel said  
we alle\* acorde herto / ffor noman can saye  
better /

Thenne wente the man and the serpente into  
the place wher as he fonde the serpente / Reynart  
bad that the serpent shold be sette in the snare in  
lyke wyse as he was / And it was don /

Thenne sayd ye my lord / reynart how thynketh  
yow now / what Iugement shal we gyue.

Thenne sayd reynart the foxe. My lord now  
ben they bothe lyke as they were to fore. they haue  
neyther wonne ne loste. See my lord how I Iuge  
for a right also ferre as it shal plese your noble  
grace. yf the man wil now lose and vnbynde the  
serpent vpon the promyse and oth. that he to fore  
made to hym. he may wel doo it. But yf he thynke  
that he for ony thyng shold be emcombryd or  
hyndred by the serpent. or for nede of hongre wold  
breke his othe and promyse. Thenne Iuge I that  
the man may goo frely where he wyl. and late the  
serpente abyde style bounden. like as he myght  
haue don at the begynnyng. ffor he wold haue  
broken his oth and promyse / where as he helpe  
hym out of suche fereful peryl / Thus thynketh me  
a ryghtful Iugement that the man shal haue his fre  
choys / like as he to fore hadde.

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\* Agaynst.

**I**O my lord this Iugement thought yow good /  
 and alle your counseyl whiche at that tyme  
 were by you/ and folewed the same / And  
 preyssed reynardis wysedom that he had made the  
 man quyte and free Thus the foxe wysely keppe  
 your noble honour and worship / as a triewe  
 seruaunt is bounde to doo to his lord / wher hath  
 the beer or the wulf don euer to yow so moche  
 worship They conne wel huylen and blasen stele  
 and robbe / and ete fatte morsellis and fylle theyr  
 belyes / And thenne Iuge they for right and lawe  
 that smale theuis that stele hennys and chekyns  
 shold be hanged / But they hem self that stelen  
 kyen oxen and horses / they shal goo quyte and be  
 lordes / And seme as though they were wyser than  
 salamon / Auncene or aristotiles / And eche wil  
 be holden hye proud / and preised of grete dedes  
 and hardy But and they come where as it is to doo /  
 they ben the firste that flee / Thenne muste the  
 symple goo forth to fore / And they kepe the  
 rereward behynde / Och my lorde these and other  
 lyke to them be not wyse / but they destroye  
 towne. castel. lande and peple. They retche not  
 whos hows brenneth. so that they may warme  
 them by the coles They seke alle theyr owne auayll  
 and synguler proffyte / But Reynart the foxe and  
 alle his friendis and lignage sorowen and thynke to  
 preferre the honour worship. fordeel and proffyte  
 of theyr lord. and for wise counseyl whiche ofte  
 more prouffyteth here than pryde and boost / This

doth reynard / though he haue no thanke / Atte  
longe it shal be wel knowen / who is beste and  
doth moste prouffyt / My lord ye saye / that his  
kynne and lignage drawe al afterward from hym /  
and stonde not by hym / for his falshede and  
deceyuable and subtil touchis / I wolde an other  
had sayde that / ther sholde thenne suche wrake  
be taken thereof / that hym myght growle that  
euer he sawe hym / But my lorde we wyl forbere  
you / ye maye saye your playsir / and also I saye  
it not by yow / Were ther ony that wolde bedryue  
ony thyng ayenst yow with wordes or with werkes /  
hym wold we soo doo to / that men shold saye we  
had ben there / Ther as fyghtyng is / we ben not  
woned to be aferd· My lorde by your leue I may  
wel gyue you knoweleche of reynardis frendis and  
kynne. ther ben many of them that for his sake and  
loue wille auenture lyf and good. I know my self  
for one. I am a wyf. I shold yf he had nede  
sette my lyf and good for hym also I haue thre ful  
waxen children which ben hardy and stronge /  
whom I wold alle to gydre auentre for his loue.  
rather than I shold see hym destroyed / yet had I  
leuer dye than I sawe them myscarye to fore myn  
eyen. so wel loue I hym.



Whiche ben frendes and kynne  
vnto Reynard the fore. capitulo  
xxxi°.



He fyrste chylde is named byteluys.  
whiche is moche cherysshid and can  
make moche sporte and game / wher-  
fore is gyuen to hym the fatte trenchours  
and moche other good mete whiche cometh wel to  
prouffyt of fulrompe hys brother / and also my  
thyrde chylde is a doughter and is named haten-  
ette / she can wel pyke out lyce and netis out of  
mens heedis / thise three ben to eche other tryewe  
/ wherfor I loue them wel /

dame rukenawe called hem forth and sayde /  
welcome my dere chyldren to me forth and stande  
by reynard your dere neuw /

Thenne sayde she / Come forth alle ye that ben  
of my kynne and reynarts / and late us praye the  
kynge that he wille doo to reynart ryght of the  
lande /

Tho cam forth many a beest anon / as the  
s quyrel / the musehout / the fychews / the martron  
/ the beuer wyth his wyf ordecale / the genete /  
the ostrole / the boussyng / and the fyret / thyse  
tweyne ete as fayne palayl as doth reynart / The  
oter and pantcroet his wyf whom I had almoste  
forgoten / yet were they to fore wyth the beuer  
enemyes to the foxe / but they durst not gaynsaye

dame rukenawe / for they were aferd of her She  
 was also the wysest of alhis kynne of counseyl and  
 was moste doubted / Ther cam also mo than xx  
 other by cause of her to stande by Rynard /  
 Ther cam also dame atrote with her ij sustres / the  
 wesel / and her mell the asse / the backe / The  
 watreratte and many moo to the nombre of xl /  
 whiche alle camen and stoden by reynard the foxe /

**N**Y lord the kyng saide rukenawe come and  
 see hier yf reynart haue ony frendis / here  
 may ye see / we ben your trewe subgettis  
 whiche ffor yow wold auenture both lyf and good  
 yf ye had nede / Though ye be hardy myghty and  
 stronge / Oure welwylyd frendship can not hurte  
 you / late reynard the foxe wel bethynke hym  
 vpon thise maters that ye haue leyd ayenst hym /  
 And yf he can not excuse them / thenne doo hym  
 right we desire no better / And this by right ought  
 to noman be warned /

The quene thenne spack. this saide I to hym  
 yesterday / But he was so fyers and angry that he  
 wold not here it.

the lupaerd saide also. Syre ye may Iuge no  
 ferther than your men gyue theyr verdyte. ffor yf ye  
 wold goo forth by wyl and myghte that were not  
 worshipful ffor your estate here allewaye bothe  
 partyes and thenne by the beste and wysest counseyl  
 gyue you Iugement discretly acordyng to the beste  
 right.

the kynge saide. this is al trewe' but I was so sore meuyd whan I was enformed of kywarts deth and sawe his heed. that I was hoot and hasty. I shal here the foxe. can he answere and excuse hym of that is leyd ayenst hym. I shal gladly late hym goo quyte. And also atte requeste of his good frendis and kynne.

Reynart was glad of thise wordis. and thoughte god thanke myn aunte' She hath the rys doo blosme aagayn' She hath wel holpen me forth now. I haue now a good foot to daunse on. I shal now loke out of myne eyen. And brynge forth the fayrest lesyngis that euer man herde. and brynge my self out of this daunger.

**How the foxe wyth subtylte excused hym for the deth of kywart the hare and of alle other maters that were leyde ayenst hym and how wyth flaterpynge gate agayn his pees of the kynge. capitulo xxxij<sup>o</sup>.**



Henne spak reynart the foxe and saide /  
 Alas what saye ye is kywart deed / and  
 where is bellyn the ramme what brought  
 he to yow / whan he cam agayn / sfor I  
 delyuerd to hym thre iewellis / I wold sayn  
 knowe where they ben be comen / That one of hem



shold he haue gyuen to yow my lord the kynge /  
And the other ij to my lady the quene /

The kynge saide / bellyn brought vs nought ellis  
but kywarts heed / lyke as I saide you to fore /  
wherof I toke on hym wrake / I made hym to lose  
his lyf / ffor the foule kaytyf said to me / that he  
hym self was of the counseyl of the lettres makynge  
that were in the male /

Alas my lord is this very trouthe / woo to me  
kaytyf that euer I was born sith that thise good  
Iewellis be thus lost myn herte wil breke for  
sorowe / I am sory that I now lyue / what shal my  
wyf saie whan she hereth herof / she shal goo out  
of her wytte for sorow / I shal neuer also longe as  
I lyue haue her frendship she shal make moche  
sorowe whan she hereth therof /

The she ape saide Reynard dere neuwe / what  
prouffyteth that ye make al this sorowe late it  
passe / And telle vs what thise Iewellis were /  
paraenture we shalle fynde counseyl to haue them  
agayn yf they be aboue erthe Mayster akeryn shal  
laboure for them in his bookis / and also we shal  
curse for them in alle chirchys vnto the tyme that  
we haue knowleche wher they been / They maye  
not be loste /

Nay aunte thynke not that / for they that haue  
them wyl not lightly departe fro them. ther was  
neuer kynge that euer gaf so riche Iewellis as  
thise be / Neuertheles ye haue somewhat wyth  
your wordes easyd myn herte and made it lighter

than it was / Alas loo here ye may see how he or  
 they to whomme a man trusteth moost is ofte by  
 hym or them deceyuyd / though I shold goo al  
 the world thorough and my lyf in auenture sette  
 therfore / I shal wyte wher thise Iewellis ben  
 becomen.



Yth a dissymlyd and sorouful speche saide  
 the foxe herken ye alle my kynne and  
 frendys / I shal name to yow / thise  
 Iewellis what they were / And thenne may ye  
 saye that I haue a grete losse / that one of them  
 was a rynge of fyn gold / and within the rynge  
 next the fynge were wretton lettres enameld with  
 sable and asure and ther were thre hebrews names  
 therin / I coude not my self rede ne spelle them /  
 for I vnderstonde not that langage but maister  
 abrion of tryer he is a wyse man / he vnderstandeth  
 wel al maner of langages and the vertue of al  
 maner herbes / and ther is no beest so fiers ne  
 stronge but he can dompte hym / for yf he see hym  
 ones he shal do as he wyl / And yet he bileueth  
 not on god / He is a Iewe / The wysest in con-  
 nyng and specially he knoweth the vertue of  
 stones. I shewde hym ones this rynge / he saide  
 that they were tho thre names that seth brought  
 out of paradys whan he brought to his sadre Adam  
 the oyle of mercy / And who someuer bereth on  
 hym thise thre names / he shal neuer be hurte by  
 thondre ne lyghtnyng ne no witchecraft shal haue

power ouer hym ne be tempted to doo synne /  
And also he shal neuer take harm by colde though  
he laye thre wynters longe nyghtis in the feelde /  
though it snowed stormed or frore neuer so sore /  
so grete myght haue thise wordes / wytnes of  
maister abrion / withoute forth on the rynge stode  
a stone of thre maner colours / the one part was lyke  
rede cristalle / and shoon lyke as fyre had ben  
therin / in suche wyse that yf one wold goo by  
nyght / hym behoued non other lighte for the  
shynnyng of the stone made and gaf as grete a  
lyghte as it had ben mydday / That other parte  
of the stone was whyte and clere as it had ben  
burnysshid / Who so had in his eyen any smarte  
or sorenes / or in his body any swellng or heed  
ache / or any sykenes withoutforth yf he stryked  
this stone on the place wher the gryef is / he shal  
anon be hole / or yf any man be seke in his body  
of venym / or ylle mete in his stomack / of colyk /  
stranguyllyon / stone / fystel or kanker or any  
other sekenes / sauf only the very deth late hym  
leye this stone in a litle watre / And late hym  
drynke it / and he shal forthwyth be hole and al  
quyte of his seknessis / Alas said the foxe we haue  
good cause to be sory to lese suche a Iewel / ffor-  
thermore the thirde colour was grene lyke glas /  
But ther were somme sprynklis therin lyke pur-  
pure / the maister told for trouthe / that who that  
bare this stone vpon hym shold neuer be hurte of  
his enemye / and that noman were he neuer so

stronge and hardy that myght mysdoo hym / and where euer that he fought he shold haue vycторыe were it by nyght or by daye also ferre as he behelde it fastyng / and also therto where someuer he wente and in what felawship / he shold be bylouyd / though they hadde hated hym to fore / yf he had the ring vpon hym / they shold forgete theyr angre as sone as they sawe hym / Also though he were al naked in a felde agayn an hundred armed men / he shold be wel herted and escape fro them with worship / but he muste be a noble gentle man / and haue no chorles condicions / ffor thenne the stone had no myght / and by cause this stone was so precious and good / I thought in myself that I was not able ne worthy to bere it / and there fore i sent it to my dere lord the kyng / far i knowe hym for the moste noble that now lyueth / and also alle our welfare and worship lyeth on hym / and for he shold be kepte fro alle drede nede and vngheluck.

**I** Fonde this rynge in my fadres tresour / and in the same place I toke a glasse or a mirrour and a combe whiche my wyf wold algates haue / a man myght wondre that sawe thise Iewellis / I sent thyse to my lady the quene / for I haue founden her good and gracious to me / this Combe myght not be to moche preysed / Hit was made of the bone of a clene noble beest named Panthera / whiche fedeth hym

bytweene the grete Inde and erthly paradyse / he is so lusty fayr and of colour / that ther is no colour vnder the heuen / but somme lyknes is in hym / therto he smelleth so swete / that the sauour of hym boteth alle syknessis and for his beaute and swete smellyng all other beestis folowe hym / for by his swete sauour they ben heled of alle syknessis / this panthera hath a fair boon brode and thynne / whan so is that this beeste is slayn al the swete odour restid in the bone which can not be broken ne shal neuer rote ne be destroyed by fyre / by water / ne by smytyng / hit is so hardy tyht and faste / and yet it is lyght of weyght / The swete odour of it hath grete myght / that who that smelleth it sette nought by none other luste in the world and is easyd and and quyte of alle maner diseases and Infirmytes / And also he is ioconde and glad in his herte / this combe is polysshid as it were fyne syluer / and the teeth of it be small and straite / And bytween the gretter teeth and the smaller is a large felde and space where is coruen many an ymage subtilly made and enameld aboute with fyn gold / the felde is checked with sable and siluer / enameld with cybore and asure / And ther in is thistorye how venus Juno and pallas strof for thapple of gold / whiche eche of them wold haue had / whiche contrauersye was sette vpon parys / that he shold gyue it to the fayrest of them thre.

**R**Arys was that tyme an herde man and kepte  
his faders beestis and sheep withoute troye /  
whan he had resceyuid thapple / Iuno  
promysed to hym yf he wolde Iuge that s'e  
myght haue thapple / he shold haue the moste  
richesse of the world / pallas said yf she myght  
haue thapple she wold gyue hym wysedom and  
strengthe and make hym so grete a lorde that he  
shold ouercome alle his enemyes / and whom he  
wold / venus saide what nedest thou richesse or  
strengthe / art not thou pryamus sone / and hector  
is thy brother whiche haue al asye vnder their  
power / art not thou one of the possessours of  
grete troye / yf thou wylt gyue to me thapple  
i shal gyue the the richest tresour of the world  
and that shal be the fayrest woman that euer had  
lyf on erthe / ne neuer shal none be born fairer  
than she / thenne shal thou be richer than riche /  
And shal clymme aboue al other / ffor that is the  
tresour that noman can preyse ynough / for honest /  
fair and good women can put a way many a sorow  
fro the herte / they be shamefast and wyse / and  
brynge a man in very Ioye and blysse / Parys  
herde this venus whiche presented hym this grete  
Ioye and fair lady and prayd her to name this  
fayr lady / that was so fair and where she was /  
venus saide / it is helene kynge menelaus wyf  
of grece / ther lyueth not anobler. richer. gen-  
tiller. ne wyser wyf in al the world / Thenne parys  
gaf to her thapple and said that she was

fayrest / how that he gate afterward helene by the  
 helpe of venus and how he brought her in to  
 troye and wedded her / the grete loue and ioly  
 lyf that they had to gydre / was al coruen in the  
 felde euery thyng by hym self / and the storye  
 wreton.



Ow ye shal here of the mirrour / the glas  
 that sto de theron was of suche vertu  
 that men myght see therin / all that was  
 don within a myle / of men of beestis and of al  
 thyng that me wold desire to wyte and knowe /  
 and what man loked in the glasse had he ony  
 dissease / of prickyng or moles / smarte or perles  
 in his eyen he shold be anon heled of it / Suche  
 grete vertu had the glas / is it thenne wondre yf  
 I be meuyd and angry for to lose suche maner  
 Iewellis. The tree in whiche this glas stode was  
 lyght and faste and was named cetyne / hit sholde  
 endure euer er it wold rote or wormes shold hurte  
 it / and therfore kynge salamon seelyd his temple  
 wyth the same wode withynforth / Men preysed  
 it derrer than fyn gold / hit is like to tre of  
 hebenus / of whiche wode kynge Crompart made  
 his hors of tree for loue of kynge morcadigas  
 daughter that was so fayr / whom he had  
 wende for to haue wonne / That hors was so  
 made within / that wo someuer rode on hit  
 yf he wolde / he shold be within lesse than on  
 hour / an hondred myle thens / And that was wel

preuyd ffor cleomedes the kynges sone wolde not  
byleue that / That hors of tree had suche myght  
vertue / He was yonge lusty and hardy / And  
desyred to doo grete dedes of prys for to be  
renomed in this world / And leep on this hors of  
tree / Crompart torned a pynne that stode on his  
brest / And anon the hors lyfte hym vp and wente  
out of the halle by the wyndowe and er one myght  
saye his pater noster / He was goon more ten myle  
weye cleomedes was sore aferd and supposed  
neuer to haue torned agayn / as thistorye therof  
telleth more playnly / but how grete drede  
he had / and how ferre that he rood vpon that  
horse made of the tree of hebenus er he coude  
knowe the arte and crafte how he shold torne  
hym / and how Ioyeful he was whan he knewe it /  
and how men sorowed for hym / and how he  
knewe alle this and the ioye therof when he cam  
agayn al this I passe ouer for losyng of tyme / but  
the moste parte of alle cam to by the vertue of the  
wode /

of whiche wode the tree that the glas stode in  
was made / and that was without forth off the glas  
half a foot brood / wherin stode somme strange  
hystories whiche were of gold / of sable / of siluer /  
of yelow / asure and cynope / thyse sixe colowrs  
were therin wrought in suche wise as it behoued /  
and vnder euery hystorie the wordes were grauen  
and enameld that euery man myght vnderstande  
what eche historye was / After my Iugement ther



was neuer myrour so costly so lustly ne so play-saunt / in the begynnyng stode there an horse made fatte stronge and sore enuyous vpon an herte whiche ran in the feeld so ferre and swyftly that the hors was angry that he ran so ferre to fore hym and coude not ouertake hym he thought he shold cacche hym and subdue hym. though he shold suffre moche payne therfore. the horse spack tho to a herdeman in this wyse. yf thou cowdest taken an herte that I wel can shewe the / thou sholdest haue grete prouffyt therof. thou sholdest selle dere his hornes his skyn and his flesshe. the herdeman sayd how may I come by hym. the hors saide sytte vpon me. and I shal bere the and we shal hunte hym til he be take. The herdeman sprange and satte vpon the hors and sawe the herte and he rode after but the herte was lyght of foot and swyft. and out ran the hors ferre they honted so ferre after hym that the horse was wery and said to the herdeman that satte on hym. now sytte of I wil reste me / I am al wery. and gyue me leue to goo fro the. The herdeman saide I haue arested the thow mayst not escape fro me. I haue a brydle on thy hede and sporis on my heles thou shalt neuer haue thanke herof / I shal bydwynge and subdue the haddest thou sworn the contrarye.

see how the horse brought hym self in thraldom and was taken in his owne nette. how may one better be taken than by his owne propre enuye

suffre hym self to betaken and riden· ther ben  
many that laboure to hurte other· and they them  
seluen ben hurt and rewarded with the same

**T**Her was also made an asse and an hound /  
whiche dwelled bothe with a riche man /  
The man louyd his hound wel / ffor he  
pleyde ofte with hym as folke doo with houndis /  
the hound leep vp and pleyd with his tayl / And  
lyckyd his maister aboute the mouth / this saw  
howdwyn the asse / and had grete spyte therof in  
his herte / and said to hym self / how may this be  
and what may my lorde see on his fowle hound /  
whom I neuer see doth good ne proffyt / sauf  
spryngeth on hym and kysseth hym / But me  
whom men putten to laboure / to bere and drawe /  
and doo more in a weke than he with his xv shold  
doo in a hole yere and yet sytteth he neuertheles  
by hym at the table / and there eteth bones flesh  
and fatte trenchours / And I haue nothyng but  
thystles and nettles / And lye on nyghtes on the  
harde erthe and suffre many ascorn / I wyl no  
lengre suffre this / I wylle thynke how I may gete  
my lordes loue and frendship lyke as the hounde  
doth / Therwyth cam the lorde / And the asse lyft  
vp his tayl and sprang with his fore feet on the  
lordes sholdres / And blered grennyd and songe  
and with his feet made two grete bules about his  
eres / And put forth his mouth and wolde haue  
kyssed the lordes mouth as he had seen the hound

doon / Tho cryde the lorde sore aferde help / help /  
 this asse wil slee me / Thenne cam his seruautis  
 with good stauis and smyten and bete the asse so  
 sore that he had wende he shold haue loste his lyf /  
 Tho retorned he to his stable and ete thistles and  
 nettles and was an asse as he to fore was.

In lyke wyse who so haue enuye and spyte of an  
 others welfare / and were seruyd in lyke wyse / it  
 shold be wel behoefful. Therfor it is concluded  
 that the asse shal ete thistelis and netteles and  
 bere the sacke / though men wold doo hym worship  
 he can not vnderstonde it / but muste vse olde  
 lewde maners / Where as asses geten lordshippis /  
 there men see selde good rewle / For they take  
 hede of nothyng but on theyr synguler prouffyt /  
 yet ben they take up and rysen grete / the more  
 pyte is /

**T**Erken ferther how my fadre and tybert the  
 catte wente to gydre / and had sworn by  
 theyr trouthe that for loue ne hate they  
 shold not departe. And what they gate / they  
 shold departe to eche the half / Thenne on atyme  
 they sawe hunters comyng ouer the felde with  
 many houndes / They leep and ronne faste fro  
 them ward al that they myghte as they that were  
 aferd of theyr lyf /

Tybert said the foxe whyther shal we now beste  
 flee / the hunters haue espyed vs / knowe ye ony  
 help / my fadre trusted on the promyse that eche

made to other / And that he wolde for no nede  
departe fro hym / Tybert said he / I haue a sack  
ful of wyles yf we haue nede / as ferre as we abyde  
to gydre we nede not to doubte hunters ne  
houndes /

Tybert bigan to syghe and was sore aferd / And  
saide / Reynart what auallyen many wordes / I  
knowe but one wyle. and theder must I too.

And tho clamme he vpon on hye tree in to the  
toppe vnder the leuys / Where as hunter ne hounde  
myghte doo hym non harme And leste my fadre  
allone in Ieoparde of his lyf. ffor the hunters sette  
on hym the houndes alle that they coude / Men  
blewe the hornes and cryed and halowed the foxe /  
Slee and take. Whan tybert the catte sawe that. he  
mocked and scorned my fadre and said what  
reynart cosyn vnbynde now your sakke wher al  
the wylis ben in / it is now tyme ye be so wyse  
called / helpe your self / ffor ye haue nede /

this moche muste my fadre here of hym to  
whom he had most his trust on / And was almoste  
taken and nygh his deth and he ranne and fledde  
wyth grete fere of his lyf and lete his male slyde  
of by cause he wold be the lighter / yet al that  
coude not helpe hym for the houndes were to  
swyft and shold haue byten him / But he had one  
auenture that ther by he fond an old hole /  
wherin he crepte / and escaped thus the honters  
and houndes /

Thus helde this false deceyuer tibaert his

sykernes that he had promysed / Alas how many  
ben there now a dayes that kepe not theyr pro-  
myse / and sette not therby though they breke it /  
And though I hate tybaert herfore / is it wonder  
but I doo not sikerly I loue my sowle to wel  
therto : Neuertheles yf I sawe hym in auenture  
and mysfalle in his body or in his goodes / I trowe  
hit shold not moche goo to my herte so that  
another dyde it : Neuertheles I shal neyther hate  
hym ne haue enuye at hym : I shal ffor goddes  
loue forgyue hym yet is it not so clere out of myn  
herte but a lytyl ylle wylle to hymward abideth  
therin as this cometh to my remembraunce / And  
the cause is that the sensualyte of my flessch fyghteth  
ayenst reson.

**H**er stode also in that myrrour of the wulf ;  
how he fonde ones vpon an heth a dede  
horse slayn but al the flessch was eten  
thenne wente he and bote grete morsellis of the  
bones that for hungre he toke thre or iiij attones  
and swolowed them in : ffor he was so gredy that  
one of the bones stack thwart in his mouth /  
Wherof he had grete payne. And was in grete  
fere of his lyf He soughte al aboute for wyse  
maisters and surgyens and promysed grete yeftis  
for to be heled of his disease : Atte laste whan he  
coude nowher fynde remedye he cam to the crane  
wyth his longe necke and bille and prayde hym  
to helpe hym and he wolde loue and rewarde hym

so wel that he sholde euer be þe better / The crane herked after this grete rewarde and put his heed in to his throte and brought out the boon wyth his bylle /

The wulf sterte a syde wyth the pluckyng / and cryde out alas thou doost me harme / but I forgyue it the / doo no more soo / I wolde not suffre it of an other /

The crane saide / Sir Isegrym goo and be mery for ye be al hool now gyue to me that ye promysed

The wulf saide / wyl ye here what he sayth / I am he that hath suffred and haue cause to playne / and he wille haue good of me / he thanketh not me of the kyndnes that I dyde to hym he put his heed in my mouth / and I suffred hym to drawe it out hole without hurtyng / And he dyde to me also harme / And yf ony hier shold haue a rewarde it shold be I by ryght /

Thus the vnkynde men now adayes rewarde them that doo them good / whan the false and subtyl aryse and become grete / thenne goth worship and prouffyt al to nought / Ther ben many of right that ought reward and doo good to suche as haue holpen hem in her nede / that now fynde causes and saye they be hurte and wolde haue amendis / where they ought to rewarde and make amendes them self / Therfore it is said and trowthe it is / whoo that wyl chyde or chastyse / see that he be clere hym self.

**L**le this and moche more than I now can wel remembre was made and wrought in this glasse / The maister that ordeyned it / was aconnyng man and a profounde clerk in many sciencis / And by cause thise Iewells were ouer good and precious for me to kepe and haue / Therefore I sente them to my dere lord the kynge and to the quene in presente / Where ben they now that gyue to theyr lordes suche presentes / The sorowe that my ij chyldren made whan I sente away the glasse was grete for they were woned to loke therin and see them self how theyr clothyng and araye bycam them on their bodyes / O alas I knewe not that kywart the hare was so nyghe his deth whan I delyueryd hym the male with this iewellis / I wiste not to whom I myght better haue taken them. though It shold have coste me my lyf. than hym and bellart the ramme / They were two of my best frendis / Oute alas I crye vpon the murderar / I shal knowe who it was. though I shold renne thurgh al the world to seke hym. ffor murdre abydeth not hyd. it shal come out perauenture he is in this companye that knoweth where kywart is bicomen. though he telleth it not. ffor many false shrewys walke wyth good men. fro whom noman can kepe hym. they knowen theyr craft so wel and can wel couere their falsenes. but the most wondre that I haue is that my lord the kyng hier saith so felly. that my fadre nor I dyde hym neuer good / that thynketh me / meruayl of a

kyng / but ther come so many thyngis to fore hym  
that he forgeteth that one wyth that other / and so  
faryth by me / Dere lorde remembre not ye whan  
my lord your fadre lyuyd / and ye an yonglyng  
of two yere were that my fadre cam fro skole fro  
Monpellier / where as he had fyue yere studied in  
receptes of medycynes / he knewe al the tokenes of  
the vryne as wel as his honde / And also alle the  
herbes and nature of them whiche were viscose or  
laxatyf / he was a synguler maister in that science /  
he myght wel were cloth of sylke and a gylt gyrdle /  
whan he cam to court he fonde the kyng in a  
grete sekenes / wherof he was sory in his hert /  
For he louyd hym aboue alle other lordes / The  
kyng wold not forgoo him / ffor whan he cam  
alle other had leue to walke where they wold he  
trusted none so moche as hyn /

he said reynard I am seke and fele me the  
lenger the werse /

My fadre said / my dere lord here is an vrynal /  
make youre water therin and assone as I may see  
it I shal telle what sekenes it is and also how ye  
shal be holpen

the kyng dyde as he conseilled hym for he  
trusted noman better that lyuyd / Though so were  
that my fader dyde not as he shold haue don to  
you / But that was by counseyl of euyl and foule  
beestis I had wonder therof / but it was a rasyng  
ayenst his deth / he sayd my lord yf ye wyl be  
hole / Ye muste ete the lyuer of a wulf of vij yere



old / that may ye not leue / or ellis ye shal deye /  
for your vryne sheweth it playnly /

the wulf stode ther by and said nought /

But the kynge said to hym sir ysegrym now ye  
here wel that I muste haue your lyuer / yf I wil  
be hool /

Tho answerd the wulf and saide / Nay my lord  
not soo / I wote wel I am not yet fyue yere olde /  
I haue herde my moder saie soo /

My fadre sayd / what skylleth this wordes / late  
hym be opened and I shal knowe by the lyuer yf  
it be good for yow or not /

And therwyth the wulf was had to kychen / and  
his lyuer taken out / whiche the kynge ete and was  
anon al hole of alle his sekenes / thenne thanketh  
he my fadre moche / and commanded alle his  
houshold upon their lyuys that after that tyme  
they shold calle hym mayster reynard



He abode styлле by the kynge and was  
byleuid of alle thyngis / and muste allewey  
go by his syde / And the kynge gaf to  
hym a garlond of rooses. whiche he muste alway  
were on his heed. but now this is al torned. Alle  
the old good thinges that he dyde. ben forgotten.  
And thise couetouse and rauenous shrewys ben  
taken vp and sette on the hye benche and ben  
herde and made grete. And the wyse folke ben  
put a back. by whiche thise lordes ofte lacke.  
And cause them to be in moche trouble and

sorowe ffor whan a couetous man of lowe byrthe is made a lorde and is moche greet and aboue his neyghbours hath power and myght / Thenne he knoweth not hym self / ne whens he is comen And hath no pyte ou nomans hurte. ne hereth nomans requeste. but yf he may haue grete yeftis. al his entent and desyre is to gadre good and to be gretter. O how many couetous men ben now in lordes courtes. they flatre and smeke / and plesse the prynce for theyr synguler auayl / But and the prynce had nede of them or their good they sholde rather suffre hym to deye or fare right hard er they wold gyue or lene hym / They be lyke the wulf / that had leuer the kinge had deyed than he wolde gyue hym his lyuer / Yet had I leuer er that the kynge or quene shold fare amys / that xx suche wulues shold lose theyr lyues / hit were also the leest losse / My lorde al this bifelle in your yougthe that my fader dyde thus / I trowe ye haue forgotten it /

And also I haue my self don yow reuerence worship and courtosye / Vnroused be it / though ye now thanke me but lytyl / but parauenture ye remembred not that I shal now saye / not to ony forwytyng of yow / for ye be worthy alle worship and reuerence that ony man can doo / that haue ye of almyghty god by enheritaunce of your noble progenytours / wherfor I your humble subgette and seruauant am bounden to doo to yow alle the seruyse that I can or maye / I cam on a tyme

walkyng with the wulfe Isegrym / And we hadde  
 gotten vnder vs bothe a swyne / And for his lowde  
 cryyng we bote hym to deth / and syre ye cam fro  
 ferre out of a groue ayenst vs. ye salewed vs  
 frendly and saide we were welcome. and that ye  
 and my lady the quene whiche cam after yow  
 hadde grete hongre. and had nothyng for to ete / and  
 prayd vs for to gyue yow parte of our wyunnyng /  
 Isegrym spack so softe that a man vnnethe myght  
 here hym. but I spack out and saide. ye my  
 lord and with a good will. though it were more  
 we wil wel that ye haue parte And thenne the  
 wulf departed as he was wont to doo / departed  
 and toke that on half for hym self / And he gaf  
 yow a quarter. ffor yow and ffor the quene / That  
 other quarter he ete and bote as hastely as he  
 myghte / bicause he wolde ete it allone / And he  
 gaf to me but half the longes that I pray god that  
 euyl mote he fare.

**H**us shewde he his condicions and nature /  
 er men shold haue songen a Credo ye my  
 lord had eten your part / And yet wold ye  
 fayn haue had more / ffor ye were not ful / And  
 bicause he gaf yow no more ne profred yow / Ye  
 lyft vp your right fote and smote hym bytwene the  
 eris that ye tare his skynne ouer his eyen / and  
 tho he myght no lengre abyde but he bledde /  
 howled and ran away and lefte his part there lye /  
 Tho said ye to hym haste yow agayn hether and

brynge to vs more / And here after see better to  
 how ye dele and parte / Thenne saide I my lord  
 yf it please yow I wylle goo wyth hym / I wote  
 wel what ye saide / I wente wyth hym / he  
 bledde / and groned as sore as he was al softly / he  
 durst not crye lowde / we wente so ferre. that we  
 brought a calf / And whan ye saw vs come ther-  
 wyth / ye lawhyd for ye were wel plesyd / ye said  
 to me that I was swyft in hontyng. I see wel  
 that ye can fynde wel whan ye take it vpon yow /  
 ye be good to sende forth in a nede / The calf is  
 good and fatte. herof shal ye be the delar I  
 saide my lord wyth a good wyl / The one half my  
 lord shal be for yow. And that other half for my  
 lady the quene. the moghettis. Lyuer longes and  
 the Inward shal be for your chyldren / the hed  
 shal Isegrym the wulf haue / and I wil haue the  
 feet. Tho said ye Reynart who hath taught you to  
 departe so courtoisly / my lord said I. that hath  
 don this preest that sytteth her with the bloody  
 crowne / he lost his skynne wyth the vncourtoys  
 departyng of the swyn. And for his couetyse  
 and raayne he hath hurte and shame

Alas ther ben many wulues now a dayes that  
 without right and reson destroye and ete them that  
 they may haue the ouerhand of / they spare neyther  
 flesh ne blood / frende ne enemye / what they can  
 gete. that take they / O woo be to that lande and  
 to townes. where as the wulues haue the  
 ouerhand /

My lord this and many other good thing haue  
I don for you / that I cowde wel telle yf it were  
not to long / of whiche now ye remembre litil  
by the wordes that I her of yow. yf ye wold al  
thyng ouersee wel / ye wold not saye as ye doo.  
I haue seen the day / that ther shold no grete  
mater be concluded in this court without myn  
aduyse / al be yt that this auenture is now fallen /  
It myght happen yet that my wordes shal be herd  
and also bileuyd as wel as an others as ferre as  
right wyl for I desyre none other / ffor yf ther be  
ony can saye and make good by suffycient wit-  
nessis that I haue trespaced I wyl abyd al the right  
and lawe that may come therof and yf ony saie  
on me ony thyng of whiche he can brynge no wyt-  
nesses. Let me thenne be rewlyd after the lawe  
and custome of thys court

the kynge saide Reynart ye saye resonably I  
knowe not of kywards deth more than that bellyn  
the Ramme brought his heed hether In the male /  
therof I lete yow goo quyte ffor I haue no wytnes  
therof /

My dere lord said [Reynart] god thanke yow /  
sykerly ye doo wel for his deth maketh me so  
sorowful / that me thynketh my herte wyl breke in  
two / o whan they departed fro me myn herte was  
so heuy / that me thought I shold haue swowned /  
I wote wel it was a token of the losse that tho was  
so nyghe comyng to me /

**A**lle the moost parte of them that were there and herde the foxes wordes of the Iewellis and how he made his contenance and stratchid hym / had veryly supposed that it had not be fayned but that it had be tryewe. they were sory of his losse and mysaventure. and also of his sorowe. The kynge and the quene had bothe pyte of hym. And bad hym to make not to moche sorowe / But that he sholde endeuore hym to seche hem. For he had so moche preysed hem. that they had grete wyl and desyre to haue them / And by cause he had made them to vnderstonde that he had sente these Iewellis to them. though they neuer had them. yet they thankyd hym. And prayd hym to helpe that they myght haue them.

**T**He foxe vnderstode theyr menyng wel. he thought toward them but lytyl good for al that. he said god thanke you my lord and my lady that ye so frendly comforte me in my sorow. I shal not reste nyght ne day ne alle they that wyl doo ony thyng for me but Renne and praye / Thretene and aske alle the four corners of the world / Though I shold euer seche tyl I knowe where they ben bicomen / and I pray you my lord the kynge / That yf they were in suche place as I cowde not gete them by prayer / by myght ne by request that ye wold assiste me and abide by me / ffor it towcheth your self / and the good is youris / And also it

is your part to do Iustyse on thefte and murdre  
whiche bothe ben in this caas /

Reynart said the kyng that shall I not leue  
whan ye knowe wher they ben / Myn helpe  
shalbe alway redy for you /

O dere lorde this is to moche presented to  
me / yf I had power and myght I sholde deserue  
ayenst yow /

Now hath the foxe his mater fast and fayr / ffor he  
hath the kyng in his hand as he wold / hym thought  
that he was in better caas than it was lyke to haue  
be / he hath made so many lesynges / that he may  
goo frely wher he wyl without complaynyng of ony  
of them alle /

Sauf of Isegrym which was to hymward angry  
and dysplesyd and saide / O noble kyng ar ye so  
moche chyldyssh that ye byleue this false and  
subtyl shrewe / and suffre your self wyth false lyes  
thus to be deceyuyd / Of fayth it shold be longe  
or I sholde byleue hym / he is in murdre and treson  
al be wrapped / And he mocketh you to fore your  
visage / I shal telle hym a nother tale I am glad  
that I see now hym here / al his lesynges shal not  
a vaylle hym er he departe fro me.



How ysegyrn the wulf com-  
playned agayn on the fore. capitulo  
xxxiij<sup>o</sup>



Y lord I pray you to take hede / this false  
theef betraied my wyf ones fowle and  
dishonestly / hit was so that in a  
wynters day that they wente to gyder  
thurgh a grete water / and he bare / my wyf an  
honde that he wold teche her take fysshe wyth her  
tayl / and that she shold late it hange in the water  
a good while and ther shold so moche fysshe cleue  
on it that foure of them shold not conne ete it.  
The fool my wyf supposed he had said trouthe /  
And she wente in the myre to the bely to er  
she cam in to the water / And whan she was in the  
depest of the water. he bad her holde her tayl /  
til that the fysshe were comen. she helde her tayl  
so longe that it was from harde in the yse and  
coude not plucke it out / And whan he sawe that.  
he sprange vp after on her body. Alas there  
rauysshyd he and forcyd my wyf so knauisshly  
that I am ashamed to telle it. she coude not  
defende her self the sely beast she stode so depe  
in the myre. herof he can not saye naye. for I  
fonde hym with the dede. for as I went aboue  
vpon the banke I sawe hym bynethe vpon my wyf  
shouyng and stekyng as men doo whan they doo



suche werke and playe. Alas what payne suffred  
I tho at my herte I had almost for sorow lost my  
fyue wyttes and cryde as lowde as I myght reynart  
what do ye there / and whan he sawe me so nyghe  
tho leep he of. and wente his waye. I wente  
to her in a grete heuine<sup>se</sup>. And wente depe in  
that myre and that water er I coude breke the yse  
and moche payne suffred she er she coude haue  
out her taylle / and yet lefte a gobet of her tayle  
behynd her / And we were lyke bothe therby to  
haue lost our lyues / for she galped and cryde so  
lowde for the smarte that she had er she cam out /  
that the men of the village cam out with stauys  
and byllis / with flaylis and pykforkes / And the  
wyuis wyth theyr distauis / and cryed dyspytously  
sle sle / and smyte down right / I was neuer in my  
lyf so aferde / ffor vnnethe we escape / we ran so  
fast that we swette ther was a vylayne that stake  
on vs wyth a pyke / whiche hurted vs sore he was  
stronge and swyfte a fote / hadde it not be nyght /  
Certaynly we had ben slayn / The fowle olde  
quenes wold fayne haue beten vs / they saide  
that we had byten theyr sheep / They cursed vs  
with many a curse / Tho cam we in a felde ful of  
brome and brembles there hydde we vs fro the  
vylaynes / And they durst not folowe vs ferther  
by nyght / but retorned home agayn See my lorde  
thys fowle mater / this is murdre / rape / and  
treson / whiche ye ought to doo Iustyce thereon  
sharply.

**R**eynard answerd and said / yf this were trewe / it shold go to nyghe myn honour and worship / god forbede that it shold be founde trewe / hit is wel trewe that I taught her how she holde\* in a place catche fyssh / and shewde her a good way for to goo ouer in to the water without goyng in to the myre / But she ranne so desyrously whan she herde me name the fyssh / That she nether way ne path helde / But wente in to the yse wherein she was forfrorn / And that was by cause she abode to longe she had fissh ynough yf she coude haue be plesyl wyth mesure it falleth ofte / who that wold haue all / leseth alle / Ouer couetous was neuer good / For the beest can not be satisfyed / And whan I sawe her in the yse so faste / I wente to haue holpen her / and heef and shoef and stack here and there to haue brought her out / But it was al payne loste / ffor she was to heuy for me / Tho cam ysegrym and sawe how I shoef and stack and dyde al my beste and he as a fowle chorle fowle and rybadously sklaundryth me wyth her. as thyse fowle vnthriftes ben wonte to doo. But my dere lorde it was none otherwyse. he belyeth me falsely paraenture his eyen daselyd as he loked from aboue doun. he cryde and cursed me and swore many an oth I shold dere abyet it / whan I herde hym so curse and thretene / I wente my waye / and lete hym curse and menace

\* Sholde, *i.e.*, should.

† Abyde.

til he was wery / And tho wente he and heef and  
shoef and halpe his wyf out / and thenne he leep  
and ran and she also for to gete them an hete and  
to warme them / or ellis they shold haue deyed  
for colde / And what someuer I haue saide a fore  
or after / that is clerely al trouthe / I wolde not  
for a thousand marke of fyn gold lye to yow one  
lesyng it were not fyttyng for me / what someuer  
falle of me I shal saye the trouthe / lyke as myn  
elders haue alway don / syth the tyme that we  
fyrst vnderstode reson / and yf ye be in doubte of  
ony thyng that I haue said otherwyse than  
trouth / gyue me respyte of viij dayes that I may  
haue counseyl / and I shal brynge suche Infor-  
macion wyth good tryew and suffycient recorde /  
that ye shal alle your lyf duryng truste and byleue  
me / and so shal all your counseyl also / what haue  
I to doo wyth the wulf / hit is to fore clerly ynowh  
shewde that he is a foule vylaynous kaytyf / and  
an vnclene beast / Whan he deled and departed  
the swyn / So is it now knowen to you alle by hys  
owen wordes that is a deffamer of wymmen as  
moche as in hym is ye may wel marke euerychone /  
Who shold luste to do that game to one so stedfast  
a wyf beyng in so grete peryll of deth now aske ye  
hys wyf / yf it be so as he sayth / yf she wyl saye  
the trouthe I wote wel / she shal saye as I doo /

Tho spack erswynde the wulfis wyf / Ache felle  
reynart / noman can kepe hym self fro the /  
thou canst so wel vttrre thy wordes and thy falsenes

and reson sette forth / but it shall be euyl rewarded  
in the ende / How broughtest thou me ones in to  
the welle where the two bokettys henge by one  
corde rennyng thurgh one polley whiche wente  
one vp and another down / thou sattest in that one  
boket bynethe in the pytte in grete drede / I cam  
theder and herde the syghe and make sorowe /  
And axed the how thou camest there / thou  
saidest that thou haddest there so many good  
fysshes eten out of the water that thy bely wolde  
breste / I said telle me how I shal come to the /  
Thenne saidest thou aunte sprynge in to that  
boket that hangeth there / and ye shal come anon  
to me / I dyde so / and I wente downward / and  
ye cam vpward tho was I alle angry / thou saidest  
thus fareth the world that one goth vp / and  
another goth down / tho sprang ye forth and wente  
your waye and I abode there allone syttyng an  
hole day sore an hongryd and a colde / And therto  
had I many a stroke er I coude get thens /

Aunte sayd the foxe / though the strokes dyde  
you harme I had leuer ye had them than I / ffor ye  
may better bere them / for one of vs must nedes  
haue had them / I taught yow good / wyl ye  
vnderstande it and thynke on it / that ye another  
tyme take better hede and bileue noman ouer  
hastely / is he frende or cosyn / for euery man  
seketh his owne prouffyt / They be now fooles  
that do not soo / And specyally whan they be in  
Ieopardye of theyr lyues.

A fayr parable of the foxe and  
the wulf. Ca° xxxiii°



Y lord said dame Erswyn I pray yow  
here how he can blowe with alle  
wyndes / And how fayr bryngeth he his  
maters forth /

Thus hath he brought me many tyme in scathe  
and hurte said the wulf / he hath ones bytrayed  
me to the she ape myn aunte / where I was in  
grete drede and fere / for I leste there almost myn  
one ere / yf the foxe wil telle it how it byfel / I  
wyl gyue hym the fordele therof / for I can not  
telle it so wel / but he shal beryspe me /

wel said the foxe I shal telle it wythout stameryng  
I shal saye the trouthe / I praye yow herken me / he  
cam in to the wode and complayned to me / that  
he had grete hongre ffor I sawe hym neuer so ful /  
but he wold alway haue had fayn more / I haue  
wonder where the mete becometh that he de-  
stroyeth / I see now on his contenance that he  
begynneth to grymme for hongre / Whan I herde  
hym so complayne I had pyte of hym / And I  
saide I was also hongry / thenne wente we half a  
day to gydre and fond nothyng / tho whyned he  
and cryed / and said he myght goo no further  
Thenne espyed I a grete hool standyng in the  
myddys vnder an hawe whiche was thyck of  
brembles / and I herde a russhyng therin I wist

not what it was / thenne said I goo therin and loke  
 yf ther be ony thing ther for vs / I wote wel ther is  
 somwhat / tho saide he cosyn I wolde not crepe  
 in to that hole for twenty pound but I wist fyrst  
 what is therin / me thynketh that ther is some  
 perylous thyng but I shal abyde here vnder this  
 tree / yf ye wil goo therin to fore / but come anon  
 agayn / And late me wete thyng is therin / Ye can  
 many a subtylte and can wel helpe your self and  
 moche better than I. See my lord the kynge /  
 Thus he made me poure wight to goo to fore in to  
 the daunger / and he whiche is grete longe and  
 stronge abode withoute and rested hym in pees /  
 awayte yf I dyde not for hym there.



Wold not suffre the drede and fere that I  
 there suffred for al the good in erthe / but  
 yf I wyste how to escape / I wente hardyly  
 in / I fonde the way derke / longe and brood / Er  
 I right in the hool cam soo espyed I a grete light  
 whiche cam in fro that one syde ther laye in a  
 grete ape with tweyne grete wyde eyen / and they  
 glymmed as a fyre / And she had a grete mouth  
 with longe teeth and sharp naylles on hir feet and  
 on hir handes / I wende hit had be a mermoyse /  
 a baubyn or a mercatte / for I sawe neuer fowler  
 beest / and by her laye thre of her children whiche  
 were right fowle ffor they were ryght lyke the  
 moder / whan they sawe me come / they gapeden  
 wyde on me and were al styll / I was aferd / And

wold wel I had ben thens / but I thoughte I am  
therin / I muste ther thurgh and come out as wel  
as I maye / as I sawe her me thought she semed  
more than ysegrym the wulf / And her chyldren  
were more than I / I sawe neuer a fowler meyne /  
they lay on fowle heye whiche was al be pyssed /  
They were byslabbed and byclagged to their eres  
to in her owen donge / hit stanke that I was  
almost smoldred therof I durst not saye but good /  
and thenne I saide / Aunte god gyue yow good  
daye and alle my cosyns your fayr chyldren / they  
be of theyr age the fayrest that euer I sawe O lord  
god how wel plesc they me / how louely / how  
fayr ben they eche of them for their beaute myght  
be a great kyngis sone / Of right we ought to  
thanke yow / that ye thus enerece oure lygnage /  
Dere aunte whan I herde saye that ye were dely-  
uered and leyd down I coude no lenger abyde but  
muste come and frendly vysite yow / I am sory  
that I had not erst knowen it /

Reynard cosyn said she ye be welcome / ffor  
that ye haue found me and thus come see me I  
thanke yow. Dere cosyn ye be right trewe and  
named right wyse in alle londes / and also that ye  
gladly furthre and brynge your lignage in grete  
worship / Ye muste teche my chyldren with the  
youris some wysedom that they may knowe what  
they shal doo and leue / I haue thought on yow /  
for gladly ye goo and felawship with the good /

O how wel was I plesyd whan I herde thise

wordes / this deseruyd I at the begynnyng whan  
I callyd her aunte / how be it that she was nothyng  
sybbe to me / ffor my right aunte is dame ruken-  
awe that yonder standeth / Whiche is woned to  
brynge forth wyse chyldren /

I saide aunte my lyf and my good is at your  
commandement / and what I may doo for yow by  
nyght and by daye / I wylle gladly teche them alle  
that I can.

I wolde fayn haue be thens for the stencche of  
them. and also I had pyte of the grete hongre  
that Isegrym had.

I saide aunte I shal commytte yow and your  
fayr chyldren to god and take my leue / My wyf  
shal thynke longe after me /

Dere cosyn saide she ye shal not departe til ye  
haue eten / for yf ye dyde I wold saie ye were not  
kynde /

Thostode she vp and brought me in an other  
hool where as was moche mete of hertes and  
hyndes / roes / fesaunts / partrychs and moche  
other venyson that I wondred for whens al this  
mete myghte come / And whan I had eten my  
bely ful she gaf me a grete pece of an hynde fro to  
ete wyth my wyf and wyth my houshold / whan  
I come home / I was a shamed to take it / But I  
myght none other wyse doo / I thankyd her and  
toke my leue / she bad me I shold come sone  
again / I sayd I wolde

And so departed thens meryly / that I so wel



had spedde / I hasted me out / and whan I cam  
and sawe ysegrym whiche lay gronyng. And I  
axed hym how he ferde / he said neuwe al euyl.  
ffor it is wonder that I lyue / brynge ye ony mete  
to ete I deye for hongre. tho had I compassion of  
hym and gaf hym that I had. And saued hym  
there his lyf. wherof thenne thanked me gretly.  
how be it that he now oweth me euyl wyl.

**H**E had eten this vp anon. tho said he Rey-  
nard dere cosyn what fonde ye in that  
hool. I am more hongry now than I was  
to fore / my teeth ben now sharpened to ete.

I said thenne / Eme haste yow thenne lyghtly  
into that hool. Ye shal fynde there ynough. there  
lieth myn aunte wyth her chyldren. yf ye wyl  
spare the trouthe and lye grete lesynges / ye shal  
haue there al your desire / But and ye saye trouthe /  
ye shal take harme /

My lord was not this ynough sayd and warned /  
who so wold vnderstonde it / that al that he  
fonde he shold saye the contrarye But rude and  
plombe beestis can not vnderstonde wysedom /  
therfore hate they alle subtil Inuencions / ffor they  
can not conceyue them. Yet neuertheles / he  
saide he wolde goo Inne / and lye so many lesyn-  
gis er he sholde myshappe that all man sholde  
haue wondre of it. and so wente forth in to that  
fowle stynkyng hool and fonde the marmosette.  
She was lyke the deuyls daughter. and on

her chyldren hyngge moche sylth cloterd in gobettis.

Tho cryde he alas me growleth of thyse fowle nyckers / Come they out of helle. men may make deuylles a ferd of hem. goo and drowne them that euyl mote they fare. I sawe neuer fowler wormes. they make al myn heer to stande right vp /

sir ysegrym said she. what may I doo therto. they ben my chyldren. And I muste be their moder. what lyeth that in your weye. whether they be fowl or fayr. They haue yow nothyng coste. here hath ben one to day byfore yow whiche was to them nyhe\* of kyn. And was your better and wyser and he sayde that they ware fayr. who hath sente yow hyther wyth thyse tydynges.

dame wyl ye wytte I wylle ete of your mete. hit is better bestowed on me than on thyse fowle wyghtes.

She sayde hier is no mete /

he saide here is ynough.

And ther wyth he sterte with his hede toward the mete. and wolde haue goon in to the hool wher the mete was. But myn aunte sterte up wyth her chyldren. and ronne to hym wyth their sharp longenayles so sore that the biode ran ouer his eyen / I herde hym crye sore and howle / but I knowe of no defence that he made / but that he ran faste out of the hool / And he was there cratched and byten / and many an hool had they

\* Near.

made in his cote and skyn / his visage was alle on  
a blood / and almost he had loste his one ere / he  
groned and complayned to me sore /

thenne asked I hym yf he had wel lyed

he sayd I saide lyke as I sawe and fonde / and  
that was a fowle bytche wyth many fowle  
wyghtis /

Nay eme said I / ye shold haue said / Fayr nece  
how fare ye and your fair chyldren whiche ben my  
welbelouid cosyns /

the wulf sayd / I had leuer that they were  
hanged er I that saide /

ye eme therfore muste ye resseyue suche maner  
payment / hit is better otherwhile to lye than to  
saye trouthe / They that ben better / wyser and  
strenger than we be haue doon so to fore vs /

See my lord the kyng thus gate he his rede coyf /  
Now stondest he al so symply as he knewe no  
harne / I pray yow aske ye hym yf it was not  
thus / he was not fer of yf I wote it wel.

**How ysegrym proferd his gloue  
to the fore for to fyght wyth hym.  
capitulo xxxv°.**



He wulf sayd I may wel forbere your  
mockes and your scornes and also your  
felle venymous wordes strong thief that  
ye ar / ye saide that I was almost dede  
for hungre / when ye helpe me in my nede / that

is falsely lyed. for it was but aboon that ye gaf to me / ye had eten away alle the flessch that was theron' / And ye mocke me and saye that I am hongry here where I stande / that toucheth my worship to nygh / what many a spyty worde haue ye brought forth wyth false lesyngis / And that I haue conspyred the kynges deth fro the tresour that ye haue seid to hym / is in hulsterlo / And ye haue also my wyf shamed and sklandred / that she shal neuer recoure it / and I shold euer be disworshipped therby yf I auengyd it not / I haue forborn yow longe / but now ye shal not escape me / I can not make her of greet preef / But I saye here to fore my lord and to fore alle them that ben here that thow art a false traytour and a morderar / And that shal I proue and make good on thy body wythin lystes in the felde. and that body ayenst body And thenne shal our stryf haue an ende / And therto I caste to the my gloue / and take thou it vp / I shal haue right of the or deye therfore /

Reynard the foxe thought how come I on this Campyng / we ben not bothe lyke / I shal not wel conne stonde ayenst this stronge theef / all my proof is now come to an ende.



How the foxe took bp the gloue.  
 And how the kynge sette to them  
 daye and felde for to come and doo  
 theyr bataylle capitulo      xxxvj<sup>o</sup>



Et thought the foxe I haue good  
 auantage. the clawes of his for feet  
 ben of. and his feet ben yet sore  
 therof. whan for my sake he was  
 vnshoed. he shal be somewhat the weyker.

Thenne sayde the foxe who that saith that I am  
 a traytour or a morderar. I saie he lieth falsely  
 and that art thou specyally ysegrym / thou  
 bryngest me / there as I wolde be / this haue I  
 ofte desyred / lo here is my plegge / that alle thy  
 wordes ben falls / And that I shal defende me /  
 and made good that thou lyst /

The kynge receyuyd the plegges / and amytted  
 the bateyll And asked borowes of them bothe /  
 that on the morn they shold come and performe  
 theyr batayll / and doo as they ought to doo /  
 Thenne the here and the catte were horowes for  
 the wulf / And for the foxe were borowys  
 grymbert the dasse / and byteluys.



How rukenawe the she ape coun-  
seyllled the fore how he sholde  
hyhaue hym in the felde ayenst the  
wulf Capitulo xxxviij<sup>o</sup>



He she ape saide to the foxe / Reyner  
neuw / See that ye take hede in your  
batayll / be colde and wyse Your eme  
taught me ones a prayer that is of  
moche vertue to hym that shal fyghte / And a  
grete maister and a wyse clerk. and was abbot of  
boudelo that taughted hym / he saide who that  
sayde deuoutly this prayer fastyng shal not that  
day be ouercomen in batayl ne in fyghting ther-  
fore dere neuw be not aferd / I shal rede it ouer  
yow to morrow / thenne may ye be sure ynough  
of the wulf hit is better to fyghte / than to haue  
the necke asondre.

I thanke you dere aunte said the foxe / The  
quarel that I haue is rightful therefore I hope I shal  
spede wel / and that shal gretely be myne helpe /  
Alle his lygnage abode by hym al the nyght /  
and helpe hym to dryue a way the tyme /

Dame rukenawe the she ape his aunte thoughte  
alway on his prouffyt and fordele / And she dyde  
alle his heer fro the heed to the tayl be shorn of  
smothe / and she anoynted alle his body wyth oyl  
of olyue / And thenne was his body also glat and

slyper / that the wulfe sholde haue none holde on hym / And he was round and fatte also on his body /

And she said to hym dere cosyn ye muste now drynke moche / that to morowe ye may the better make your vryne / but ye shal holde it in tyl ye come to the felde / And whan nede is and tyme / so shall ye pysse ful your rowhe tayll / and smyte the wulf therwyth in his berde / And yf ye myght hytte him therwyth in his eyen<sup>e</sup> thenne shal ye byneme hym his syght / that shold moche hyndre hym / but ellis hold alway your tayl faste bytwene your legges that he catche yow not therby / and holde doun your eris lyeng plat after your heed / that he holde you not therby / And see wisely to your self and at begynnyng flee fro his strokes. And late hym sprynge and renne after yow / and renne to fore where as moste dust is / and styre it wyth your feet that it may flee in his eyen and that shal moche hyndre his syght / And whyle he rubbeth his eyen take your auantage and smyte and byte hym there as ye may most hurte hym / And alleway to hytte hym wyth your tayll ful of pysse in his visage and that shal make hym so woo / that he shal not wyte where he is / And late hym renne after yow for to mak hym wery / Yet his feet ben sore / of that ye made hym to lose his shooes / and though he be greet / he hath no herte / Neuew certaynly this is my counseyll.

**I** He connyng goth to fore strengthe / ther-  
fore see for your self / And sette your self  
wysely atte defence / that ye and we alle  
may heue worship therof / I wold be sory yf ye  
myshapped / I shal tech you the worde that  
your eme mertyn taught me / that ye may ouer-  
come your enemye / as I hope ye shal doo wythout  
doubte /

therwyth she leyde her hand vpon his heed and  
saide these wordes / Blaerde Shay Alphenio /  
Kasbue Gorfons alsbuiario / Neuwe now be ye  
sure fro alle myschief and drede / and counseyle  
yow that ye reste you a lytyl / for it is by the  
daye / ye shal be the better dysposed / we shal  
awake you in al in tyme /

aunte said the foxe I am now glad / god thanke  
you ye haue don to me suche good I can neuer  
deserue it fully agayn / me thynketh ther may no  
thyng hurte me syth that ye haue said thyse  
holy wordes ouer me /

Tho wente he and leyd hym down vnder a tre  
in the grasse and slepte tyl the sonne was rysen /  
tho cam the otter and waked hym and bad hym  
aryse / and gaf hym a good yonge doke / and  
said / dere cosyn I haue this nyght made many a  
leep in the water er I coude gete this yonge fatte  
doke / I haue taken it fro a fowler / take and ete it /

Reynart sayde this is good hansele / yf I re-  
fused I were a fool / I thanke yow cosyn that ye  
remembre me / yf I lyue I shal rewarde yow /



The foxe ete the doke with oute sawce or breed  
 it sauourd hym wel and wente wel in / And he  
 dranke therto iiij grete draughtis of water / Thenne  
 wente he to the bataylle ward and alle they that  
 louyd hym wente wyth hym.

**How the foxe cam in to the felde  
 and how they foughten / capitulo  
 xxxviij<sup>o</sup>**



Han the kynge sawe reynart thus shorn  
 and oyled he said to hym / Ey foxe  
 how wel can ye see for your self /  
 he wondred therof he was fowle to  
 loke on /

but the foxe said not one worde but kneled  
 down lowe to therthe vnto the kynge and to the  
 quene and stryked hym forth in to the felde /

The wulf was ther redy and spack many a  
 proud word / the rulers and kepars of the felde  
 was the lupaert and the losse / they brought forth  
 the booke / on whiche sware the wulf that the  
 foxe was a traytour and a morderar / and none  
 myght be falsar than he was / and that he wolde  
 preue on his body and make it good / Reynart the  
 foxe sware that he lyed as a false knaue and a  
 cursyd theef and that he wold doo good on his  
 body /

Whan this was don the gouernours of the felde /  
 bad them doo theyr deuoyr / Thenne romed they  
 alle the felde sauf dame rukenawe the she ape /  
 she abode by the foxe and bad hym remembre wel  
 the wordes that she had sayd to hym / she said  
 see wel too / whan ye were vij yer olde ye were  
 wyse ynowh to goo by nyght wythout lanterne /  
 or mone shyne / Where ye wyste to wynne ony  
 goode / ye ben named emong the peple wyse and  
 subtyl / payne your self to werke soo that ye  
 wynne the prys / thenne may ye haue euer honour.  
 and worship / and al we that ben your frendys /  
 he answerd my derest aunte I knowe it wel / I  
 shal doo my beste and thynke on your counseyl /  
 I hope so to doo that alle my lignage shal haue  
 worship therby / and myn enemyes shame and  
 confusion /  
 she sayde god graunte it yow.

### How the foxe and the wulf foughten to gydre ca° xxxix°



Herwyth she wente out of the felde /  
 and lete them tweyne goo to gydre / the  
 wulf trade forth to the foxe in grete  
 wrath and opened his fore feet / and  
 supposed to haue taken the foxe in hem / But the  
 foxe sprang from hym lyghtly / For he was lyghter  
 to fote than he / The wulf sprange after and

hunted the foxe sore / theyr frende stodes / withoute the lystes and loked vpon hem / The wulf stode wyder than reynard dyde and ofte ouertoke hym / And lyfte vp his foot and wende to haue smyten hym / but the foxe sawe to / and smote hym wyth his rowhe tayle / Whiche he had al bepyssed in his visage / tho wende the wulf to haue ben plat blynde / the pysse sterte in his eyen / thenne muste he reste for to make clene his eyen / Reyner thoughte on his fordele and stode aboute the wynde skrabbing and casting with his feet the duste that it flewe the wulfis eyen ful / the wulf was sore blynded ther wyth in suche wyse that he muste leue the rennyng after hym / ffor the sonde and pysse cleuyd vnder his eyen that it smerted so sore / that he muste rubbe and washe it a way /

Tho cam reynar in a grete angre and bote hym thre grete woundes on his heed wyth his teeth / and said / what is that syr wulf / hath one there byten yow / how is it wyth yow / I wyl al otherwyse on yow yet / abyde I shal brynge yow somm newe thyng / ye haue stole many a lambe and destroyed many a symple beest / and now falsely haue appeled me and brought me in this trouble / al this shal I now auenge on the / I am chosen to reward the for thyn old synnes ffor god wyl no lenger suffre the in thy grete rauayn and shrewdness / I shal now assoylle the and that shal be good for thy sowle take paciently this pennance / for thou shalt lyue no longer / the

helle shal be thy purgatorye / Thy lyf is now in  
my mercy / but and yf thou wilt knele doun and  
aske me forgyfnes / and knowleche the to be  
ouercomen / yet though thou be euyl / yet I wyl  
spare the / for my conscience counseylleth me /  
I shold not gladly slee no man /

Isegrym wende wyth thyse mockyng and  
spytous wordes to haue goon out of his wytte /  
And that dered hym so moche that he wyste not  
what to saye buff ne haff / he was so angry in his  
herte / The wounds that reynart had gauen hym  
bledde and smarted sore / And he thought how  
he myghte best auenge it.

**W**yth grete angre he lyft vp his foot and  
smote the foxe on the heed so grete a  
stroke / that he fyl to the ground / tho  
sterthe the wulf to and wende to haue take  
hym / but the foxe was lyght and wyly and roose  
lyghtly vp and mette wyth hym fiersly and there  
began a felle bataylle whiche dured longe / the  
wulf had grete spyte on the foxe as it wel semed /  
he sprange after hym x tymes eche after other /  
and wold fayn haue had hym faste / but his skyn  
was so slyper and fatte of the oyle that alway he  
escaped fro hym O so subtyl and snelle was the  
foxe / that many tymes whan the wulf wende wel  
to be sure of hym / he sterte thenne bytwene his  
legges and vnder his bely and thenne torned he  
agayn and gaf the wulf a stroke wyth his tail ful of

pysse in his eyen that Isegrym wende he sholde haue loste his syght / and this dyde he often tymes / And alwey whan he had so smyten hym thenne wolde he goo aboute the wynde and reyse the duste / that it made nis eyen ful of stufs / Isegrym was woo begon / and thought he was at an afterdele / yet was his strengthe and myght moche more than the foxes / Reynard had many a sore stroke of hym / whan he raught hym / They gaf eche other many a stroke and many a byte whan they saw theyr auantage / And eche of hem dyde his best to destroye that other / I wold I myght see suche abaytaylle / that one was wyly / and that other was stronge / that one faught wyth strengthe / and that other with subtylte.

**H**He wulf was angry that the foxe endured so longe ayenst hym yf his foremost feet had ben hole / the foxe had not endured so longe / but the sores were so open that he myght not wel renne / And the foxe myght better of and on than he / And also he swange his tayl wyth pysse ofte vnder his eyen / and made hym that hym thoughte that his eyen shold goo out /

Atte laste he sayd to hym self / I wyl make an ende of this bataylle / How longe shal this caytyf dure thus ayenst me / I am so grete / I shold yf I laye vpon hym presse hym to deth / hit is to me a grete shame that I spare hym so longe / Men shal

mocke and poynte me wyth fynGRES to my shame  
and rebuke for I am yet on the werst syde / I am  
sore wounded / I blede sore / and he drowneth  
me / wyth his pysse / and caste so moche dust and  
sande in myne eyen / that hastely I shal not conne  
see / yf I suffre hym ony lenger / I wyl sette it in  
auenture / and seen what shal come therof /

wyth that he smote wyth his foot reynard on the  
heed that he fyll down to the ground And er he  
cowde aryse he caught hym in his feet· and laye  
vpon hym as he wold haue pressed hym to deth.  
Tho began the foxe to be a ferd. and so were alle  
his frendis whan they sawe hym lye vnder· And on  
that other syde alle ysegryms frendes were ioyeful  
and glad. The foxe defended hym faste wyth his  
clawes as he laye vpward wyth his feet· And gaf  
hym many a clope· The wulf durste not wyth his  
feet doo hym moche harme but wyth his teeth  
snatched at hym as he wold haue byten hym. whan  
the foxe sawe that he shold be byten and was in  
grete drede. he smote the wulf in the heed with his  
formest clawes and tare the skynne of bytwene his  
browes and hys eeres. and that one of his eyen  
henge out. Whiche dyde hym moche payne· he  
howlyd. he wepte· he cryde lowde. and made  
a pyteuous noyse for the blode rann down as it had  
ben a streme

How the foxe beyng vnder the  
wulf wyth flaterynge wordes glosed  
hym. that the foxe cam to his aboute  
agayn. capitulo xl<sup>o</sup>

**H**e wulf wyped his eyen. the foxe was glad  
whan he sawe that / he wrestled so  
sore / that he sprang on his feet whyles  
he rubbed his eyen / the wulf was not  
well plesyd therwyth alle / And smote after hym  
er he escaped and caught hym in his armes and  
helde hym faste / notwithstanding that he bledde /  
Reynard was woo thenne / There wrestled they  
longe and sore / The wulf wexe so angry that he  
forgot al his smarte and payne and threw the foxe  
al plat vnder hym / whiche cam hym euyl to passe /  
ffor his one hand by whiche he deffended hym  
sterre in the fallyng in to ysegryms throte / and  
thenne was he aferd to lese his hand /

The wulf sayd tho to the foxe / Now chese  
whether ye wyl yelde yow as ouercome / or ellis I  
shal certaynly slee yow / the skaterynge of the dust /  
thy pysse / thy mockynge ne thy deffence / ne alle  
thy false wyls / may not now helpe the / thou  
mayste not escape me / Thou hast here to fore don  
me so moche harme and shame / and now I haue  
lost myne one eye / and therto sore woundeed /

Whan reynard herde that it stode so rowme /

that he shold chese to knowleche hym ouercomen  
and yelde hym / Or ellis to take the deth / he  
thought the choys was worth ten marke / And that  
he muste saye that one or that other / he had anon  
concluded wold saie / and began to saye to hym  
wyth fayr wordes in this wyse /

Dere eme I wyl gladly become your man wyth  
alle my good / And I wyl goo for you to the holy  
graue / and shal gete pardon and wynnynge for your  
cloistre / of alle the chyrches that ben in the holy  
lande / Whiche shal moche prouffyte to your sowle  
and your elders sowles also / I trowe ther was  
neuer suche a prouffre / prouffred to ony kynge /  
And I shal serue you / lyke as I shold serue our holy  
fader the pope / I shal holde of you al that I haue  
and euer ben your seruauant and forth I shal make  
that al my lignage shal do in lyke wyse / Thenne  
shal ye be a lord a boue alle lordes / who shold  
thenne dare doo ony thyng ayenst you / And  
furthermore what someuer I take of polaylle /  
ghees / partrych or plouyer / fysshe or flesshe or  
what someuer it be / therof shal ye fyrst haue the  
choys / and your wyf and your chyldren / er ony  
come in my body / Therto I wyl alway abyde by  
you / that where ye be ther shal no hurte ne  
scathe com to yow / ye be strong and I am wyly /  
late vs abyde to gydre / that one wyth the  
counseyl and that other wyth the dede / then may  
ther nothyng mysfalle to vs ward / and we ben so  
nygh of kynne eche to other / that of right shold



be no angre bytwene vs / I wold not haue foughten  
ayenst yow yf I myght haue escaped / But ye ap-  
peled me fyrst vnto fyghte / Tho muste I doo /  
that I not doo wold gladly / And in this bataylle  
I haue ben curtoys to yow / I haue not yet  
shewde the vtterist of my myght on yow /  
like as I wold haue doon yf ye had ben a  
straunger to me / ffor the neuw ought to spare the  
eme / it is good reson and it ought so to bee / Dere  
eme so haue I now doo / And that maye ye marke  
wel whan I ran to for yow. myn herte wold not  
consente therto. ffor I myght haue hurte yow  
moche more than I dyde. but I thought it neuer ffor  
I haue not hurte yow ne don yow so moche harm  
that may hyndre yow. sauf only that myshappe that  
is fallen on your eye / ach therfore I am sory and  
suffre moche sorow in my herte. I wold wel dere  
Eme that it had not happed yow. But that it had  
fallen on me. so thet ye ther wyth had ben plesyd.  
how be it. that ye shal haue therby a grete auaun-  
tage. For whan ye here after slepe ye nede not  
to shette but one wyndowe. where another muste  
shette two. My wyf and my children. and my  
lignage shal falle dounn to your feet / to fore  
the kynge and to fore alle them that ye wyl  
desyre and praye yow humbly / that ye wyl suffre  
reynart your neuw lyue and also I shal knowleche  
ofte to haue trespaced ayenst yow / and what  
lesynges I haue lyed vpon yow / How myght ony  
lord haue more honour than I proffre yow / I

wold for no good do this to another / therfore I  
praye yow to be plesyd here wyth al

**I** Wote wel yf ye wolde ye myght now slee  
me / but and ye so don had / what had ye  
wonne / so muste ye euer after this tyme  
kepe yow fro my frendes and lignage / Therfore  
he is wyse that can in his angre / mesure hym self  
and not be ouer hasty / and to see wel what may  
falle or happe afterward to hym / what man that  
in his angre can wel aduyse hym certaynly he is  
wyse / Men fynde many fooles that in hete hasten  
hem so moche / that after they repente hem / and  
thenne it is to late / but dere Eme I trowe that  
ye be to wyse so to doo / hit is better to haue  
prys honour / reste / and pees / And many frendes  
that be redy to helpe hym / than to haue shame /  
hurte / vnreste / and also many enemyes lyeng in  
a wayte to doo / hym harme / Also it is lityl wor-  
ship to hym that hath ouercomen aman / thenne to  
slee hym / it is grete shame / not for my lyf  
Though I were deed / that were a lytyll hurte.

**I** Segrym the wulf said / Ay / theef how fayn  
woldest thou be losed and dyscharged  
fro me / that here I wel by thy wordes /  
were thou now fro me on thy free feet / Thou  
woldest not sette by me an egge shelle / Though  
thou promysedest to me alle the world of syn rede  
gold / I wold not late the escape / I sette lytyl

by the and alle thy frendes and lignage / Alle  
that thou hast here said is but lesyngis and fayned  
falsenes / Wenest thou thus to deceyue me / it is  
longe syth that I knewe the I am no byrde to  
be locked ne take by chaf / I know wel ynowh  
good corn / O how woldest thou mocke me / yf I  
lete the thus escape / thou myghtest wel haue  
said this to one that knewe the not / but to me  
thou locest thy flatteryng and swete floytyng / ffor  
I vnderstande to wel thy subtyl lyeng talys  
/ Thow haste so ofte deceyued me / that me  
behoueth now to take good hede of the. Thou  
false stynkvng knaue thou saist that thou hast  
spared me in this batayl. loke hetherward to me /  
is not myn one eye out / and therto hast thou  
wounded me in xx places in my heed. thou woldest  
not suffre em so longe to reste. as to take ones my  
breeth. I were ouer moche a fool yf I shold  
now spare the. or be mercyful to the so many  
a confusion and shame as thou hast don to  
me. and that also that toucheth me moste  
of alle. that thou hast disworshipped me and  
sklaundred erswyn my wyf. Whom I loue as wel  
as my self. and falsely forrest and deceyuedest  
her. whiche shal neuer out of my herte. ffor  
as ofte as it cometh to myn mynde / alle  
myn angre and hate that I haue to the re-  
neweth.

In the mene wyll that ysegrym was thus  
spekyng. The foxe bithoughte hym how he myght

helpe hym self. And stack his other hond after  
 bytwene his legges. And grepe the wulf fast by  
 the colyons. And he wronge hem so sore that for  
 woo and payne / he muste crye lowde and howle /  
 Thenne the foxe drewe his other hond out of his  
 mouth / The wulf had so moche payne and  
 anguyssh of the sore wryngyng that the foxe dowed  
 and wronge his genytours / that he spytte blood /  
 And for grete payne he byshote hym self

**How ysegrim the wulf was over-  
 comen and how the batayl was taken  
 vp and synysshid/And how the foxe  
 had the worship capitulo xli<sup>o</sup>**

**T**His payne dyde hym more sorow and  
 woo / than his eye dyde that so sore  
 bledde / and also it made hym to ouer-  
 throwe alle in a swowne ffor he had so  
 moche bledde / and also the threstyng that he  
 suffred in his colyons made hym so faynt that he  
 had lost his myght / Thenne reynard the foxe lepe  
 vpon hym wyth al his myght / And caught hym by  
 the legges and drewe hym forth thurgh the felde /  
 that they alle myght see it / and he stack and  
 smote hym sore / Thenne were ysegryms frends al  
 ful of sorowe / and wente al wepyng vnto theyr  
 lord the kynge / And prayde hym that he wold

doo sece the batayll and take it vp in to his hande

The kynge graunted it / and thenne wente the kepars / of the felde the lupaerd and the lossem and saide to the foxe and to the wulf / Our lord the kynge wil speke wyth yow / and wyl that this batayl be ended / he wil take it in to his hand / he desyreth that ye wyl gyue your stryf vnto hym ffor yf ony of yow here were slayn / it shold be grete shame on bothe sydes / For ye haue as moche worship of this felde as ye may haue /

and they sayde to the foxe / Alle the beestis gyue to yow the prys / that haue seen this bataylle /

The foxe said therof I thanke hem / and what that shal plesse my lord to commande that shal not I gaynsaye / I desire no better / but to haue wonne the felde / late my frendes come hether to me / I wil take aduysse of them what I shal doo /

They saide / that they thought it good / And also it was reson in weyghty maters a man shold take aduys of his frendes /

thenne cam dame slopecade / and grymbert the dassse her husbond / dame rukenawe wyth her ij susters / Byteluys and fulrompe her ij sones and hatenet her doughter / the flyndermows and the wezel / And ther cam moo than xx / whiche wolde not haue comen yf the foxe had loste the feeld. So who that wynneth and cometh to hys aboue. he geteth grete loos and worship / And who that

is ouer throwen. And hath the werse. to hym  
wyl no man gladly come. Ther cam also to the  
foxe / the beuer. the otter and bothe theyr wyues  
panthecrote and ordecale. And the ostrole. the  
Martre the fychews. the fyret. the mowse. and the  
squyrel and many moo than I can name. And alle  
bycause he had wonne the feeld. ye some cam  
that to fore had complayned on hym and were now  
of his next kynne. and they shewde hym right  
frendly chier and contenance. Thus fareth the  
world now. who that is riche and hye on the  
wheel. he hath many kynnesmen and frendes. that  
shal helpe to bere out his welthe. But who that  
is nedy and in payne or in pouerte. fyndeth but  
fewe frendes and kynnesmen. for euery man  
almost esheweth his companye and waye.

There was thenne grete feste / they blewe vp  
trompettis and pyped wyth shalmoyses /

They sayden alle der neuw blessyd be god that  
ye haue sped wel / we were in grete drede and fere  
whan we saw yow lye vnder /

reynart the foxe thanked alle them frendly / and  
resceyued them wyth grete Ioye and gladnes /  
Thenne he asked of them what they counseyllid  
hym / yf he sholde gyue the felde vnto the kyng :  
or noo /

Dame slopecade sayde / ye hardely cosyn /  
Ye may wyth worship wel sette it to his handes /  
And truste hym wel ynough /

Thoo wente they alle wyth the kepars of the

feelde vnto the kynge / And Reynard the foxe  
wente to fore them alle / wyth trompes and pypes  
and moche other mynstralcy / The foxe kneled  
doun to fore the kynge

The kynge bad hym stande vp / and said to  
hym / reynard ye be now Ioyeful / ye haue kepte  
your day worshipfully / I discharge yow. and late  
yow goo frely quyte where it plesyth yow / And  
the debate bytwene yow I holde it on me / And  
shal discusse it by reson and by counseyl of  
noble men and wil ordeyne therof that ought be  
doon by reson. at suche tyme as ysegrym shal be  
hool. And thenne I shal. sende for yow to come  
to me. And thenne by goddes grace I shal yeue  
out the sentence and Iugement.

An ensample that the fore told to  
the kynge whan he had wonne the  
felde. capitulo xliij<sup>o</sup>



Y worthy and dere lord the kynge.  
saide the foxe I am wel a greed and  
payd therwyth. But whan I cam fyrst  
in to your court. ther were many that  
were felle and enuyous to me. Whiche neuer had  
hurte ne cause of scathe by me / but they thought  
that they myght beste ouer me / And alle they  
cryden wyth myn enemyes ayenst me / and wold  
fayn haue destroyed me / by cause they thought

that the wulf was better withholden and gretter wyth you than I was whiche am your humble subget / They knewe none other thyng why ne wherfore / They thoughte not as the wyse be woned to doo / that is what the ende may happen /

My lorde thyse ben lyke a grete heep of hounndes whiche I ones saw stonde at a lordes place vpon a donghil / where as they awayted that men sholde brynge them mete / Thenne saw they an hound come out of the kychen / and had taken there a fayr rybbe of beef er it was gyuen hym / And he ran fast away wyth all / but the cook had espyed or he wente away / and toke a grete bolle full of scaldyng water / and caste it on his hyppes behynde / Wherof he thankyd nothyng the cook / ffor the heer behynde was skalded of / And his skyn semed as it had be thurgh soden / Neuertheless he escaped away / and kepte that he had wonne /

And whan his felaws the other houndes saw hym come wyth this fayr rybbe / They called hym alle and saide to hym / O howe good a frende is the cook to the / Whiche hath gyuen to the so good a boone / Wheron his so moche flessch /

The hounde saide ye knowe nothyng therof / Ye preyse me lyke as ye see me to fore wyth the bone / But ye haue not seen me behynde / take hede and beholde me afterwarde on myn but-



tokkis. And thenne ye shal knowe how I haue deseruyd it.

And whan they had seen hym behynde on his hyppes how that his skynne and his flessch was al rawe and thurgh soden / tho growled them alle and were aferd of that syedyng water / and wold not of his felawship / but fledde and ran away from hym / and lete hym there allone /

**S**Ee my lord this right haue thyse false beestis / whan they be made lordes and may gete their desire / and whan they be myghty and doubted / thenne ben they extortionners and scatte and pylle the peple / and eten them lyke as they were forhongred houndes / These ben they that bere the bone in her mouth / Norman dar haue to do wyth hem / but preyse alle that they bedryue / Noman dar saye other wyse / but suche as shal plese hem by cause they wold not be shorn / and somme helpe them forth in theyr vnryghtwys dedes by cause they wold haue parte and lykke theyr fynGRES / and strengthe them in theyr euyl lyf and werkis / O dere lorde how lytyl seen they that do thus after behynde them what the ende shal be atte laste they fal fro hye to lowe in grete shame and sorowe / and thenne theyr weerkis come to knowleche and be opene in suche wyse that noman hath pyte ne compasconn on them / in theyr meschief and trouble / and euery man curse them and saye euyl by them to

their shame and vylanye / many of suche haue  
 ben blamed and shorn ful nyghe that they had no  
 worshipe ne prouffyt / but lose theyr heer as the  
 hound dyde. that is theyr frendes. whiche haue  
 holpe them to couere their mysdedes and extor-  
 conns. lyke as the heer coueryth the skynn / And  
 wehan they haue sorow and shame for theyr olde  
 trespaces. thenne eche body pluckyth his hand  
 fro hym. And flee. lyke as the houndes dyde fro  
 hym that was scalded wyth the syedyng water /  
 and lete hym thyse extorcions in her sorow and  
 nede /

**N**Y dere lorde kynge I beseche you to remem-  
 bre this example of me / it shal not be  
 ayenst your worship ne wysedom / What  
 wene ye how many ben ther suche false extor-  
 cionners now in thise dayes / ye moche werse  
 than an hound / that bereth suche a bone in his  
 mouth / in townes / in grete lordes courtes / whiche  
 wyth grete facing and bracyng oppresse the poure  
 peple wyth grete wronge / and selle theyr fredom  
 and pryuelages / and bere them on hond of  
 thyngis that they neuer knewe ne thoughte / And  
 all for to gete good for theyr synguler proffyte /  
 God gyue them all shame and soone destroye  
 them who somme euer they be that so doo /

but god be thanked said the foxe / ther may  
 noman endwyte me ne my lygnage ne kynne of  
 suche werkys / but that we shal acquyte vs / And

comen in the lyghte / I am not a ferd of ony / that  
 can saye on me ony thyng that I haue don other-  
 wyse than a trewe man ought to doo / Alleway the  
 foxe / shall a byde the foxe though alle his enemyes  
 hadde sworn the contrarye / My dere lorde the  
 kynge I loue you wyth my herte aboue alle lordes /  
 And neuer for noman wold I torne fro yow / But  
 abyde by yow to the utterist how wel it hath ben  
 otherwyse enformed your hyenes / I haue neuer-  
 theles alway do the best / and forth so wylle doo  
 alle my lyf that I can or may /

**How the kyng forgaf the foxe alle  
 thyngis / and made hym souerayn  
 and grettest ouer al his landes. ca<sup>o</sup>  
 xliij<sup>o</sup>**



He kynge sayde Reynard ye be one of  
 them that oweth me homage whiche I  
 wyl that ye allway so doo. And also I  
 wylle that erly and late ye be of my  
 counseyl. and one of my Iustyses / See wel to  
 that ye not mysdoo ne trespace nomore. I sette  
 yow agayn in alle your myght and power. lyke as  
 ye were to fore and see that ye further alle maters  
 to the beste righte. For whan ye sette your wytte  
 and counseyl to vertue and goodnesse. thenne may  
 not our court be wythout your aduyse and coun-  
 seyl. for here is non that is lyke to yow in sharp

and hye counseyll ne subtyller in fyndyng a remedye for a meschief. And thynke ye on th example that ye yourself haue tolde. And that ye haunte rightwysnes and be to me trewe. I will frohens forth werke and doo by your aduyse and counseyll. he lyueth not that yf he mysdede yow. But I shold sharply aduenge and wreke it on hym ye shalle oueralle speke and saye my wordes. And in alle my lande shall ye be aboue alle other souerayne and my bayle. That Offyce I gyue yow. ye may wel occupye it wyth worship /

Alle reynardis frendis and lignage thanketh the kynge heily /

The kynge sayde / I wolde doo more ffor your sake / than ye wene / I pray yow alle that ye remembre hym that he be trewe /

Dame rukenawe thenne sayd yes sykerly my lord / that shal he euer be / And thynke ye not the contrary / for yf he were otherwyse / He were not of our kynne ne lignage And I wold eue myssake hym / and wold euer hyndre hym to my power /

Reynart the foxe thanked the kynge with fayr curtoys wordes / And sayd / dere lorde I am not worthy to haue the worship that ye doo to me / I shal thynke theron and be trewe to you also longe as I lyue / and shal gyue you as holsom counseyl as shal be expedient to your good grace / here wyth he departed wyth his frendes fro the kynge /



Ow herke how Isegrym the wulf dyde /  
bruyne the bere / thybert the catte / and  
erswynde and her chyldren wyth their  
lignage drewen the wulf out of the felde / and  
leyde hym vpon a lyter of heye / and couerd hym  
warm / and loked to his woundes whiche were wel.  
xxv. and ther came wyse maistres and surgyens.  
Whiche bonde them and weeshe hem he was so  
seke and feble / that he had lost his felynge / But  
they rubbed and wryued hym vnder his temples  
and eyen / that he sprange out of his swound / and  
cryde so lowde that alle they were aferde / they  
had wende that he had been wood

But the maistres gaf hym a drynke that com-  
forted his herte and made hym to slepe They  
comforted his wyf / And tolde to her that ther was  
no deth wounde ne paryl of his lyf Thenne the  
court brake vp / and the beestis departed and  
wente to theyr places and homes that they came  
froo.



How the foxe wyth hys frendis  
and lignage departed nobly fro the  
kyng / and wente to his castel  
malleperduys / capitulo xlii<sup>o</sup>

**R**Eynart the foxe toke his leue honestly of  
the kyng and of the quene. And they  
bad hym he shold not tarye longe. But  
shortly retorne to them agayn he  
answerd and said dere kyng and quene alway at  
your commandement I shal be redy / yf ye nede  
ony thyng whiche god forbede I wold alway be  
redy wyth my body and my good to helpe yow /  
and also al my frendes and lignage in lyke wyse  
shall obeye your commandement and desire / ye  
haue hyely deseruyd it / god quyte it yow and  
yeue yow grace longe to lyue / And I desyre your  
licence and leue to goo home to my wyf and chyl-  
dren / And yf your good grace wil ony thyng /  
late me haue knowleche of it And ye shal fynde  
me alway redy /

Thus departed the foxe wyth fayr wordes fro  
the kyng.

**O**w who that coude sette hym in reynardis  
crafte / and coude behaue hym in flatering  
and lyeng as he dyde / he shold I trowe be  
herde / bothe wyth the lordes spyrytuel and tem-

porel / The ben many and also the moste parte  
that crepe after his waye and his hole / The name  
that was gyuen to hym abydeyth alway styll wyth  
hym / he hathe lefte many of his crafte in this  
world / Whiche allewaye wexe and become  
myghty / for who that wyl not vse reynardis erafte  
now is nought worth in the world now in ony  
estate that is of myght. But yf he can crepe in  
reynardis nette / and hath ben his scoler / thenne  
may he dwelle with vs / For thenne knoweth he  
wel the way how he may aryse / And is sette  
vp aboue of euery man / Ther is in the world moche  
seed left of the foxe / whiche now oueral groweth  
and cometh sore vp / though they haue no rede  
berdes / Yet ther ben founden mo foxes now than  
euer were here to fore / The ryghtwys peple ben  
al loste / trouthe and rightwysnes ben exyled and  
fordriuen / And for them ben abyden wyth vs  
couetyse / falshede / hate and enuye / Thyse reyne  
now moche in euery contre / For is it in the popes  
court / the emperours / the kynges / dukes or ony  
other lordes where someuer it be eche man  
laboureth to put other out fro his worship / offyce  
and power / for to make hym sylf to clymme hye  
with lyes / with flaterieng / wyth symonye / wyth  
money / or wyth strengthe and force / ther is  
none thyng byloued ne knowen in the court now  
adays but money / the money is better byloued  
than god / For men doo moche more therfore /  
ffor who someuer bryngeth money. shal be wel

receyuyd and shal haue alle his desyre / is it of lordes or of ladyes or ony other / that money doth moche harme / Money bryngeth many in shame and drede of lyf / and bryngeth false wytnes ayenst true peple for to gete money. Hit causeth vnclennes of lyuyng lyeng. and lecherye. Now clerkes goon to rome / to parys and to many another place. for to lerne reynardis crafte is he clerke / is he laye man eueriche of them tredeth in the foxes path. and seketh his hole. The world is of suche condycion now. that euery man seketh hym self in alle maters. I wote not what ende shal come to vs herof Alle wyse men may sorowe wel herfore. I fere that for the grete falsenes thefte robberye and murdre that is now vsed so moche and comonly. and also the vnshamefast lecherye and auoultry bosted blowen a brood with the auauntyng of the same. that wythout grete repentaunce and penaunce therfore / that god will take vengeance and punysshe vs sore therfore / whom I humbly beseche and to whom nothyng is hyd that he wylle gyue vs grace to make amendes to hym therfore / and that we maye rewle vs to his playsyr

And her wyth wil I leue ffor what haue I to wryte of this mysdedis / I haue ynowh to doo with myn owne self / And so it were better that I helde my pees and suffre / And the beste that I can doo for to amende my self now in this tyme. And so I counseyle euery man to doo here in this



present lyf / and that shal be most our prouffyt /  
 For after this lyf / cometh no tyme that we may  
 occupye to our auantage for to amende vs ffor  
 thenne shal euery man answe're for hym self and  
 bere his own burthen /



Eynardis frendes and lignage to the nom-  
 bre of xl haue taken also theyr leue of the  
 kyng / And wente alle to gydre wyth the  
 foxe / whiche was right glad that he had so  
 wel sped / And that he stode so wel in the  
 kynges grace. he thought that he had no shame.  
 but that he was so grete with the kyng that he  
 myght helpe and further his frendes / and hyndre  
 his enemyes / and also to doo what he wolde.  
 wythout he shold be blamed yf he wold be wyse /

The foxe and his frendis wente so longe to  
 gydre that they camen to his burgh to Male-  
 perduys. ther they alle toke leue eche of other  
 wyth fayr and courtoys wordes / Reynard dyde to  
 them grete reuerence and thanked them alle  
 frendly. of theyr good fayth and also worship that  
 they had don and shewd to hym. And profred to  
 eche of them his seruyse yf they had nede wyth  
 body and goodes / And herwyth they departed and  
 eche of them wente to theyr own howses /

The foxe wente to dame ermelyn his wyf whiche  
 welcomed hym frendly he tolde to her and to his  
 chyl dren / alle the wonder / that to hym was  
 befallen in the court. And forgate not a worde /

but tolde to them euery dele / how he had escaped /  
Thenne were they glad that theyr fader was so  
enhaunsed and grete wyth the kynge / And the  
foxe lyued forthon wyth his wyf and his chyldren  
in great Ioye and gladnes /

Now who that said to yow of the ffoxe more or  
lesse than ye haue herd or red / I holde it for  
lesynge / but this that ye haue herd or red / that  
may ye byleue wel / and who that byleueth it not /  
is not therfore out of the right byleue / how be it  
ther be many yf that they had seen it / they shold  
haue the lasse doubte of it / for ther ben many  
thynges in the world whiche ben byleuyd though  
they were neuer seen / Also ther ben many fygyres /  
playes founden / that neuer were done ne happed /  
But for an example to the peple / that they may  
ther by the better / vse and folowe vertue / and  
teschewe synne and vices / in lyke wyse may it  
be by this booke / that who that wyl rede this  
mater / though it be of iapes and bourdes / yet he  
may fynde therin many a good wysedom and  
lernynge / By whiche he may come to vertue and  
worship. Ther is no good man blamed herein /  
hit is spoken generally / Late euery man take his  
owne part as it belongeth and behoueth / and he  
that fyndeth hym gylty in ony dele or part therof /  
late hym bettre and amende hym And he that is  
verly good / I pray god kepe hym therin And yf  
ony thyng be said or wreten herin / that may greue

or dysplease any man / blame not me / but the  
foxe / for they be his wordes and not myne /

Prayeng alle them that shal see this lytyl treatis /  
to correcte and amende / Where they shal fynde  
faute / For I haue not added ne mysnusshed but  
haue folowed as nyghe as I can my cotype whiche  
was in dutche / and by me william Caxton trans-  
lated in to this rude and symple englyssh in th  
abbey of westmestre. fynysshed the vj daye of Juyn  
the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.Lxxxj. and the xxj  
yere of the regne of kynge Edward the iiijth /

**Here endeth the historpe of  
Reynard the foxe etc.**









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